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BIDDING FOR GERMANY

THE great gamble for Germany continues. The stakes are piled higher, and the bidding grows more hazardous. Holding what is in many ways a weaker hand than the Western Allies, the Russians, in creating an East German Government, have made correspondingly greater concessions. Where the West German Government exists only by virtue of an "occupation statute" which reserves to the occupying Powers the control of foreign policy and much of the substance of sovereignty, Mr. Otto Grotewohl's Government (also, like its rival in the West, an "all-German" government) is to have authority over foreign relations and to run its own economic policies. The Ministers both of Foreign Affairs and Labour will be Christian Democrats. Further, the Soviet Union is evidently prepared to sign a peace treaty with this Government, and to give a date for the evacuation of Soviet troops, which, if reports are reliable, are already leaving Berlin.

In considering the effects of all this, one thing should remain clear. Whether they choose *rouge* or *noir*, the stakes of the Powers are placed on German nationalism. When the *Tägliche Rundschau*, the official organ of Soviet military government, wrote lately of the National Front (from which the new Government arises) that it "unites all forces which have the unity and independence of their fatherland at heart, and defends the true national interests of the German people," it was only following a clearly-defined Soviet programme. The Russians have always believed that the cardinal error of the German Communists was to have allowed the "national ticket" to be captured by the Right-wing parties of the Weimar period. Hence Ulbricht's remark last August that the Socialist Unity Party "cannot afford to look back on the party membership of individuals, but, with good will, must go forward shoulder to shoulder with every nationally-minded German who desires the unity of Germany, a just peace, and thereafter the withdrawal of the forces of occupation."

The challenge to Western policy is two-fold. In the first place, the Russians have set themselves to show that it is they and not the Western Allies, the Communists and not the bourgeois parties, who care most for the reunification and the national revival of Germany. And what makes their position strong—in so far as they can succeed in this project—is that they do this on their own terms. They avoid immediate elections, knowing, no doubt, that these would reveal the same Rightward trend as the elections in Western Germany—or, last week-end, in Austria. They offer economic independence after expropriating the bigger industrialists, dividing up the land, and drastic denazification. They suggest withdrawal of their troops after forming a police force which, though not nearly so militant as some Western critics have liked to think, would probably be strong enough to put down incipient *Freikorps* on the 1919 model. They offer a peace treaty with the idea, perhaps, of following it with an alliance which should give them some guarantee against "invasion" of Eastern Germany by Western Germany. They leave Germany, in short, with their best friends in power. What makes it hard for the Western Powers to outbid them in this game is that a Western withdrawal would leave in power, or on their way to power, men and movements who are likely to prove the worst friends of the West.

The Russians have one other card which may prove an ace and powerful enough, as time goes on, to overcome their political disadvantages in Germany. The standard of living in the Eastern Zone may be lower than in the West. But there is much to suggest that while the standard in the West is sinking, with unemployment nearing one and a half millions, the standard in the East is rising. The two-year plan of the Eastern Zone, unlike some of the East European plans, was supervised by Soviet officials with long experience; the targets, apparently, were set within reasonably easy reach and are in fact being reached and at some points surpassed. There is no unemployment. Even though the luxury goods which crowd the shop windows of Western Germany may be lacking, the contrast with West Germany's grossly uneven development is bound sooner or later to work favourably for the Communists. Already the Russians have opened the Zonal frontier for several "day excursions," designed, no doubt, to show the excursionists that the "recovery" of the West is a rich man's recovery and a poor man's ruin.

Whether or not these Russian calculations prove reliable, this latest move in Germany is only one more reason for bringing the Four-Power gamble in German nationalism to an end as soon as possible. For the real danger of the Soviet challenge lies precisely in the fact that Western policy, as at present framed, can answer it only by counter-concessions to the nationalism of the Western Zones—a nationalism from which nothing but evil can be expected.

Two Elections

The election results in Norway and Austria have one feature in common—the defeat of the Communists—but otherwise they are poles apart. In Norway, the Labour Government, despite the confident anticipations of the Opposition, has won a resounding victory, not only virtually annihilating the Communists, but making game of the Right as well. Since Norway has felt the full effect of the economic crisis and the Labour Government was defending a policy of "fair shares and control" against advocates of freer enterprise, this result will be of particular interest to Lord Woolton and Mr. Morgan Phillips. In Austria, on the other hand, the position of the Socialists has been slightly weakened, though they fared far better than the German Socialists last August. The most remarkable success has

been that of the Union of Independents, a new Party which openly canvassed for the newly enfranchised ex-Nazis and won sixteen seats against seventy-seven for Dr. Figl's Peoples' Party and sixty-seven for the Socialists. The Communists, together with the splinter Socialists who support them, retain five seats. This means that the coalition between the Peoples' Party and the Socialists will continue to rule the country; but its centre of balance has shifted a little towards the Right.

Routine Crisis in France

If M. Jules Moch succeeds in forming a Ministry, he is expected to maintain the conservative control of the economic Departments which has existed since 1947. He proposes to extricate himself from the economic difficulties which caused M. Queuille to resign by raising the wages of unskilled and other low-paid workers. This is not a new device. Several of M. Moch's predecessors during the last few years have begun their period of office by a gesture of conciliation towards the Unions—only to fall, sooner or later, when the gesture could not be repeated. It remains to be seen whether M. Moch has something new up his sleeve. He has built up his reputation as a Minister by successful and energetic repression of Communist strikes. Now he is faced with a more difficult task. In spite of a high level of employment, encouraging recovery of production in heavy industry, and the assurance of continuing American aid, the French economy is far from stable. As Prime Minister, M. Moch has no longer the Communists as his principal enemy, but the cost of living.

Recognising Facts In China

The fact that America has burnt her fingers in China by intervening on the side of Chiang Kai-shek should not be allowed to prejudice the issue of recognition, which is now perplexing the State Department. Its Far Eastern Division seems to have gone to considerable pains to produce a one-sided brief for Mr. Bevin with the object of undermining his intelligent desire to face facts and to recognise the only real Government in China. Meanwhile, in London, Pandit Nehru advocated recognition, and in Rangoon the Burmese Government let it be known that it inclined to the same policy. Neighbours of China, and, until recently, also victims of Western imperialism, they understand the social and nationalist forces which have led to Communist victories. Delay in recognising Mao's Government plays straight into the hands of Communist propagandists throughout Asia. In the "cold war" in Asia, and more particularly in China, the cards are heavily stacked in Soviet hands. The first international move made by the U.S.S.R. was the offer in 1917 to end the unequal treaties with China; to-day she was the first Power to recognise the Government headed by Mao Tse-tung, and therefore has again established herself in Chinese minds as the one Power which understands and supports emancipated China. Mao's is the only effective Government in China to-day; the Kuomintang is now only a rump consisting of a few officials evacuating here and there in a vain attempt to save face. Meanwhile, the last General—Pai Chung-shi—has retreated towards Kwangsi Province, thus opening wide the door for the Communist armies to march victoriously into Canton.

Round Table Progress

Prospects of an Indonesia-Netherlands agreement seem to be measurably brighter; some difficulties still remain, but hopes are entertained at The Hague that the broad principles, at least, of an all-round agreement will be laid down by the end of this month. In the political field, the status of New Guinea, for which the Dutch now seem likely to propose a joint "trusteeship" administration, has still to be defined; and, in the sphere of military defence, the Indonesians are reluctant to accept the Dutch view that both partners in the Union should automatically be involved in any war waged by the other. Distinct progress, however, is understood to have been made in dealing with the hitherto intractable problems of the transfer of sovereignty in economic issues. The Dutch now seem to be taking a more realistic view and to be recognising that having gone so far in conceding political sovereignty to the Republic they have no moral case for sticking to their original reluctance to grant real autonomy in the economic field. It is still not clear whether the Dutch have abandoned their demand that the Republic's National Bank should be independent of the State and should have a Dutch President; but they are reported to be now willing to waive their claim that Holland should have a right of veto on foreign borrowing by the Republic so long as Indonesia is in debt to the Netherlands. As for the extent of this indebtedness, which the Dutch originally assessed at 6,000 million guilders, the Indonesians, on the basis of Dutch figures, have apparently reached the conclusion that, after the deduction of the cost of Dutch military action, there is a small net amount owing by the Netherlands to Indonesia. The Dutch will probably dispute this conclusion, but they appear ready to scale down their original figure to 2,000 million guilders and to view more favourably the Indonesians' contention that, if there is any money due from the Republic to the Netherlands, repayment should be subject to a moratorium.

The Deficit

The provisional balance of payment figures for the first half of this year, now issued in a Treasury White Paper, add little to the broad lines of the picture already drawn by the Chancellor. The overall surplus of £45 millions achieved in the second half of 1948 was converted into a deficit on current account of £10 millions composed of a "visible minus" of £48 millions and an "invisible plus" of £38 millions. The dollar deficit of the United Kingdom, however, was £153 millions, and that of the whole sterling area £239 millions, met by drawings of £188 millions on Marshall Aid, the Canadian credit and (by India) on the International Monetary Fund, and a draft of £51 millions on Britain's gold and dollar holdings. A figure in the White Paper to which Parliament is likely to devote anxious attention is that of military expenditure overseas, which amounted in the first six months of this year to £112 millions, as compared with £115 millions in the whole of 1948. The figures are not strictly comparable, since that for January-June, 1949, appears to include £55 millions paid to India and Pakistan in connection with the war stores settlement concluded last year. But even though some parts of the expenditure may be non-recurring, it seems likely—especially if Hongkong is added to all our other commitments—that overseas expenditure will increase next year.

Longer Hours ?

There has been a good deal of discussion of the kite thrown out last week by Mr. Jack Jones, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Supply, about a longer working week. It is not quite clear what Mr. Jones did mean; but he seems to have contemplated a reversion to working on 6 days instead of five in those industries where the five-day week is now in force. This might increase total output in a few trades, as it has done in the coalmines and, under different conditions, in the continuous process sections of the steel industry. But in other industries Saturday work might actually reduce output. Women, for instance, who have shopping to do, would probably be less inclined to do overtime on other days if they had to spend Saturday morning at work. In April, according to the latest Ministry of Labour return, the average hours worked in a wide range of industries amounted to 45.3 as compared with 46.5 in 1938. Men averaged 46.6 hours (as against 47.7 in 1938), and women 41.8 as against 43.5. The fall in actual hours worked is much less than the half-day which most people suppose to have been knocked off the working week. Of course, costs (and earnings) would fall if the *standard* week were lengthened, so that fewer hours had to be paid for at overtime rates. But this would not necessarily mean any more output, and can hardly be what Mr. Jones had in mind. There is much to be said for concentrating work on five days instead of six, unless conditions in a particular industry call for a spread as the only way of getting full output.

Coal and its Troubles

It looks as if the new proposals about miners' coal will avert the threatened coal strike in Lancashire and Cumberland, where the workers have been claiming concessions to put them on a level with the other coalfields. The N.C.B. has now offered 6 tons a year at 24s. a ton, plus a contribution of 1s. 6d. a week from the men. What seems to be still unsettled is whether the coal thus granted on special terms is to be deducted from the allocations in coalfields where the miners have been getting more than the national average. Apart from the threatened strike in the North-West, matters in the coal industry have not been going too well of late. The demand for coal in home industries has been rising, and recruitment to the mines has been running well below replacement level. The situation is serious enough to call for fresh measures to increase output. Production figures for July and August were very little above the amounts for the same months last year, and stocks were lower. The number of workers on the collieries' books in August was the lowest since January, 1948. Output per man-shift at the coal face was good by most standards, but could not offset the serious decline in total shifts worked. Clearly the industry must somehow get more new workers, and mechanisation must be further speeded up and absenteeism, if possible, reduced.

Bricks Off Tariff Walls

From early April to late August representatives of 34 countries bargained solidly at Annecy about tariffs, and in less than a year's time they will be at it again. In the interval there is to be held next February a further general confer[ence] of the signatories to the interim agreement wh[ich] for the present takes the place of the full Cha[rter] of the International Trade Organisation—[which] looks like continuing to do so for some tim[e to] come. The Annecy negotiations have achi[eved] nothing at all spectacular: they hardly could [in] the present disturbed state of most of the count[ries'] balances of payments. But eleven fur[ther] countries have been brought into the discussi[ons], which now include most of the important trad[ing]

countries that are free to join. Germany and [illegible] are still outside; and so, among free agents, are the Argentine, Switzerland, Egypt, Eire, Turkey, Portugal and Mexico. The whole structure has, of course, been built up largely under American influence, and the Americans have constantly aimed at limiting what they regard as "discrimination" to the least that is compatible with balance of payments difficulties. As far as Great Britain is concerned, most of the tariff concessions made at Annecy have applied to new or semi-finished materials, and only moderate concessions on exported manufactures have been obtained in return. Only one or two, not very important, imperial preferences are affected—with Dominions consent. In general, the negotiations have procured only a very mild lessening of trade barriers, and there is about this a certain air of using a Nasmyth hammer to crush a series of nuts.

No Siesta For Unesco

A correspondent, who has been attending the Fourth General Conference of Unesco in Paris, writes: At the end of the Conference the Director-General summoned his staff. They assembled with the smugness of school on Speech Day, expecting encomiums and, at least, a "Stand Easy." What Jaime Torres Bodet had to offer them was blood and sweat and tears—no Mexican siesta but midnight oil. Armed with new powers of dismissal, he was prepared to be as tough with his staff as he had been with the Conference, before which he had hit out in defence of his Organisation and its programme. As powerful critics learned to their discomfiture, Torres Bodet is a strong man who is determined to make this functional agency of Uno function. A shrewd politician, he had mustered the Latin-American bloc solidly behind him and had, symbolically, become the champion of the Have-nots against the Haves. As a result, the smaller nations consistently out-voted any resolution which questioned or impaired the 'Director-General's programme." This was unfair on the British and American delegations. Providing nearly half the budget of Unesco, they were fighting for efficiency but found themselves accused of undermining Unesco's principles.

This was supposed to be a purely business conference, ratifying or amending but not extending the programme commitments laid down at Beirut last year. It is true that both the British and Americans had instructions from their Treasuries as to the financial "ceiling," but their concern, as they fought item-by-item through the budget, was less with dollars or devalued sterling than with the proper spending of the money. Nevertheless, they were made to appear niggardly by delegates whose countries' contributions could not pay a day's costs of Unesco. No wonder they were exasperated and often humiliated. Yet their critics were perversely right. If Unesco is to fulfil its mission of spreading education, science and culture in the dark areas of the world, there is merit in taking as well as giving. If Torres Bodet can persuade those countries who were so loyal in his support to be as zealous for Unesco within their own borders as they were in the conference room in Paris, and undertake reforms and use the help which Unesco can give them, he will make Unesco a power out of all proportion to the 8,000,000 dollar budget which he ultimately achieved. For Unesco is not a secretariat in Paris; it is every one of the fifty member nations implementing its principles and, by self-help and mutual-help, advancing its objects. The organisation will be as effective as its members make it.

WAGES AND DEVALUATION

DEVALUATION of the pound finally became an unavoidable step; but it has not solved any of our fundamental problems. It has simply taken us a stage nearer to facing hard realities. As long as there was a sellers' market over most of the world; as long as the United States was consuming most of the fruits of its rising productivity at home; as long as Western Germany and Japan were largely out of the running as competitive sellers—as long as these conditions persisted the British recovery appeared, despite the lag in coal production, to be proceeding at a reasonably satisfactory rate. Throughout the earlier stages of recovery, we were well ahead of most of the other war-scarred countries in first regaining and then surpassing pre-war output; and we recuperated quickly from the "bad weather" setback of 1947. But now other countries, helped on by Marshall Aid, have in their turn put on a spurt, whereas in our case there has been an unquestionable lag in production, not yet fully apparent in the statistics of our exports, though the state of the "visible balance" is already sufficiently disquieting.

This is the background against which the Trade Unions—many of them with unsatisfied wage-claims at various stages of negotiation—have to face the new conditions created by devaluation, involving the certainty of a gradual, though perhaps not a steep, rise in the cost of living. Their leaders are well aware that it would do their members no good to press for all-round wage advances sufficient to offset higher prices as they arise. The simplest arithmetic is enough to show that, without higher productivity, the increased exports that must be found in order to balance our international accounts with sterling at its reduced dollar value must come out of home market supplies. The reduced sum available in Marshall Aid widens the gap; the slackening of business turnover in the United States, with its inevitable repercussions on other countries, makes the gap harder to bridge; there is already more, and there soon will be much more, international competition to be met. Nor can we comfort ourselves that if we fail to expand our sales abroad, there will be all the more to consume at home. Our ability to buy foodstuffs and materials is limited by what we can earn by exports; and the penalty for failing to sell enough will be less work and less to eat and wear.

Trade Union leaders know this. Most Unions, as far as can be seen at present, are prepared to concentrate mainly on an attempt to prevent a deterioration in the economic position of their worse-paid members—of those whose wages are hardly now up to a tolerable minimum standard, as it is thought of to-day. But can the British economy afford even to treat as sacrosanct a standard which will be accepted as a tolerable minimum? Is, say, a national minimum of £5 a week for adult men, with adjustments to meet price changes, within the means of British industry in its present state?

The answer turns on what is meant. In April of this year—the most recent date for which figures exist—average weekly *earnings* for all the industries covered by the Ministry of Labour's returns were nearly 140s. in the case of men over 21, and 77s. 2d. for women over 18. This average leaves out a number of industries, of which coal mining, railways and agriculture are the most important; and it is, of course, an average which lumps all grades together, irrespective of skill, and includes additional payments for overtime, piecework and special work. There are no figures which make it possible to distinguish between degrees of skill, or between differences of opportunity for earning more than the standard weekly rates. There are, however, separate figures for the various industries; and these show a range from 170s. for newspaper printing and the manufacture of motor vehicles to 114s. for the Local Government Services and 108s. for linen and jute. These are extreme cases: in the majority of trades, men's weekly earnings averaged from 147s. to 127s.

When one turns, however, from *earnings* to *wage-rates* the situation looks very different. Here we have, for the industries covered by Wages Councils, figures of the minimum rates in force last month; and for the lowest-paid grades in these industries the majority of weekly time-rates for a standard week are between 90s. and 86s., with rates as low as 82s. and 80s. in the worst-paid trades. Pieceworkers usually get more than the time-rates; but even so, it seems clear that it would mean a substantial addition to the total wages bill if standard rates were brought up to a minimum of £5 a week. It is well known that many railwaymen are also at a standard rate well below this level. The recent Railway Tribunal showed that, whereas the average earnings in the lowest paid grades were 112s. 7d., the weekly rates for these grades averaged only 92s. 10d. Similar conditions must exist in many other industries not covered by the returns.

So it makes all the difference whether the £5 that is often suggested as a national minimum for men refers to wage-rates or to earnings. It would probably not cost a great deal to bring total earnings up to that amount, if this could be done without any effects on earnings above the minimum, or on the inducement to work overtime or to go out to make piecework balances. But obviously this is not the question. A guaranteed £5 a week would involve the offer of inducements above the £5 for all overtime or special work and also an increase in piecework payments above the minimum. It would be quite unfair, as well as calamitous, to offer a guaranteed weekly wage without at the same time readjusting the payments made for additional time or effort. Unless this were done, there would be a sharp fall in overtime, and also in output under piecework conditions. Accordingly, the proposed national minimum of £5, with appropriate minima for women and for young workers, would cost a great deal more than would be needed merely to level the lowest paid workers up to the required basic income.

These considerations are quite apart from the problems of differential payments for higher skill or responsibility, to which Mr. Arthur Deakin drew attention in an article published last week-end. As we have pointed out more than once, the effect of wage changes during and since the war has been to narrow considerably the traditional gaps in most industries between skilled and less skilled workers. In general, this narrowing can be regarded as appropriate to the conditions of a siege economy; but it has some unfortunate effects, apart from the feeling it creates among those highly skilled workers who are least able to add to their incomes by increasing their output or by overtime. It adversely affects recruitment to skilled trades which take a long time to learn, and thus prejudices the maintenance of high standards in the coming generation. These disadvantages, however, are largely unavoidable in the existing situation, except where improvements in the higher rates can be linked to increases in output.

It is, therefore, rather disquieting to find Mr. Deakin stressing just now the "grave difficulties"

in the way of improving the standards of the lowest paid groups without corresponding rises to meet the claims of the higher paid workers that the existing differentials shall not be further narrowed. Mr. Deakin expresses doubt whether the higher grades of workers would accept the proposal for a national minimum, even temporarily, without corresponding rises throughout industry. This attitude is the more disquieting because Mr. Deakin both represents the largest of the Trade Unions catering for the less skilled workers and was in the chair at the meeting of the General Council at which the proposal for a national minimum was discussed.

Mr. Deakin bases his opposition, not only on the need to preserve differentials and incentives, but also on the danger of undermining the established methods of collective bargaining, industry by industry. This is the familiar ground on which the Trades Union Congress has hitherto resisted all proposals for a "national wage policy" —that is, for any system that would take wage-relativities out of the hands of the separate Unions and would make the determination of wage-rates a matter for decision either by the Government or by a tribunal with a general mandate to share-out the available "wages-fund" in accordance with its conceptions of distributive justice as modified by national interest. It is easy to understand the hostility of the Trade Unions to any such system, which would in part remove the key-function of wage-bargaining out of their hands. But the proposal to institute some sort of general minimum wage falls a long way short of what is usually understood by a "national wages policy"; and Mr. Deakin's objection hardly seems to apply to it unless the Trade Unions really mean to insist that nothing must be done for the bottom dogs without parallel advances elsewhere—advances which, under present conditions, would set inflationary forces dangerously in motion, unless there were a sensational increase in productivity.

Most Trade Unionists would see the dilemma much more clearly were they not influenced by their knowledge of the abnormally high profits that are being made in many industries, and by the fear that devaluation will actually swell profits where exporters do not need to cut their dollar prices by the full amount of the fall in the exchange rate. The Chancellor is raising the tax on distributed profits; but the fact has to be faced that the vast sums placed in business reserves, however necessary for the re-equipment of industry with a view to increased production, become the absolute property of the shareholders and can be used for current spending by anyone who cares to sell off a few of his shares or even merely to pledge them as security for a bank overdraft. As long as these very high profits exist, austerity will be unenforceable on the owners of the shares to whose value they accrue.

In these circumstances, there is a strong case for linking a national minimum wage, designed to safeguard the living standards of the worst-off wage-earners, not only with a readjustment of social service benefits at the bottom level, but also with a capital levy of a much more drastic character than the special contribution of two years ago. If wages are to be in effect frozen for some time to come, except for the lowest paid workers or where they can be improved as a return for higher production, there must be some real assurance that the burdens of the national emergency are not being placed on the workers to the exclusion of the profit-makers. A capital levy is both highly desirable in itself, and the best way of reassuring the workers that the Government is not abandoning the principle of "fair shares" or being browbeaten by Anglo-American capitalists into an attack on its own side.

COMMUNIST TRIALS

THE trial of Rajk and his companions, the arrests of Communists, fellow-travellers and others in Hungary and neighbouring countries are, like the long tale of purges in Russia before the war, incidents of personal tragedy in the vast drama of Communist revolution. To condemn these trials as merely examples of tyranny is just as misguided as to pretend that all who suffer, confess and die in Communist courts are traitors, justly condemned. These are trivial, superficial interpretations. No doubt small men with inflated ambitions play their part; the informer, the mean seeker for personal advantage, the sadist, and the merely foolish—these may complicate the pattern. But the issue is as great as that which was once held to justify Popes in massacring whole communities of heretics and which plunged Europe into civil war for a century.

If the idea is big enough and its adherents sufficiently fanatical, then the everyday considerations of truth, affection and compassion count for nothing. And, lest we fall into a common cant, let us recall that, when desperately threatened, Christians are as ready as Communists to act as if the end justifies the means. Those who have applauded the indiscriminate bombing of open cities can point no finger of scorn in this matter. The difference is that Christians hope, when disembowelling each other, to be able to re-establish moral relations when the current dispute is settled, while to the Communist war is a continuous process that can only cease when all class enemies, Imperialists, Trotskyists, Titoites and other heretics are finally liquidated.

Much misunderstanding is inevitable because whereas the Communist is always politically at war with all the bourgeoisie, he himself lives in a bourgeois society and, until the time for action comes, behaves as an exemplary citizen, devoted worker and stimulating friend and companion. As long as the argument relates to a distant country we may be at times exasperated, but not seriously troubled, by his attitude to truth. In discussing the Soviet world, he will, for instance, first indignantly deny as a vile slander upon the Soviet Union the suggestion that concentration camps exist in Siberia; when evidence is produced he will blandly explain that there are still many class enemies who must be kept out of harm's way. A similar process of argument is applied to trials and purges. In public the thousands who were put to death in the U.S.S.R. between 1936 and 1938 were traitors or saboteurs; in private the Communist will admit that the situation was far more complex than that; that the holocaust had its propagandist and security side; and that when Stalin finally called it off it was because it was no longer politically wise to let the informer hound people to death. Carefully analysed, much of the evidence against life-long Communists was manifestly rubbish. But that does not shake the Communist's faith, since he never has thought a particular charge important provided that the accused was in some way or other an obstacle to Soviet progress.

Therefore to-day I read the authorised text of the Rajk trial, published by the Hungarian Government, with complete scepticism. If it is decided that so important a Communist as Rajk should die, there must be a good reason of State which will certainly not be that given at the trial. It is not impossible in the labyrinthian convolutions of Balkan politics that Rajk in the early thirties may have had dealings with the police as well as with the Communist Party. It is quite impossible that he could have been made Foreign Minister and then Minister of the Interior except as the result of loyal and indeed heroic services to the Communist underground movement during the war. In the trial none of his services to his party or to his country are mentioned. Instead, we find built up round Rajk an ingenious and unlikely story about Tito. The object of the Rajk trial is clearly enough to create throughout Eastern Europe the image of Tito as the newest traitor and most dangerous enemy within the Soviet camp. This role of public enemy No. 1 has been vacant since the murder of Trotsky. It need surprise no one that Rajk, whose sincerity as a Communist is not doubted by informed persons, should agree to confess to these improbable charges. Since he is to die in any case he is ready enough to blacken himself as a last service to his party. In the section of his evidence relating to Yugoslavia his memory falters. He even makes mistakes, which afterwards have to be unofficially corrected, in the names of those whom he has accused of being anti-Soviet agents. By a happy coincidence his story is corroborated by the testimony of a Yugoslav informer, Brankov, who adds for good value that Mr. Churchill (whom we all thought hated Tito as a Communist while he accepted him as a necessary ally) was really conspiring during the war with Tito not to beat the Germans but to reconquer the Balkans and Eastern Europe for Western imperialism. It will sound incredible, but reading this evidence suggests to me that Hungarian Communists have actually forgotten that Russia, Yugoslavia and Britain were allies in the war and that it was therefore not unnatural for Tito to receive a British military mission. Some day Stalin will be tried for accepting lend-lease from America.

Clearly the amount of truth or falsehood in this rigmarole is not important. The point of these trials is to expose to everyone in Eastern Europe the crime of Titoism, or, if we prefer it, "national Communism." This heresy would have reared its head in countries with a strong national tradition even if it had not been embodied in the flamboyant personality of Tito. Yugoslav Communists, though helped during the war by the West and in the final stages by Russia, did most of their own liberating, and were from the outset independent and, from the Kremlin's point of view, ill-disciplined. In their minds Tito shared the glory with Stalin. There has been constant friction between Belgrade and Moscow. The climax seems to have come when Tito refused to standardise Yugoslav arms with those of Russia, thus maintaining his military independence. He also discussed at one time with Dimitrov a plan to create a Balkan Federation in which he would have been at least as great a figure as Stalin. It is of course ludicrously untrue that Yugoslav Communism was in the least "Western." On the contrary, there was no country in Eastern Europe in which the Western visitor felt more thoroughly a foreigner. But Moscow, as always, looks ahead. Yugoslav economic plans were over-ambitious and not efficient. Tito tended to favour the peasants rather than the town proletariat. There was certainly a danger that he would develop into a personal dictator; that Yugoslav independence would end in its forming friendly contacts with the West and even learning to rely on Western trade and Western machinery. In the meantime, Tito's rebellion was sowing discontent amongst national Communists in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. By forcing the issue in 1949 Moscow has deliberately compelled Tito to commit the crime with which he is charged and to turn to the West for self-protection. If

American imperialists can now hope for influence and bases in Yugoslavia, that is because the Kremlin has willed it so. The technique of provoking sin in order that the victim may be punished is not new. Heresy must be exposed at its very inception. The rotten branch must be severed from the tree.

The effect of these events in the West must be great. The period of People's Democracies, with their popular dynamic, their large measure of tolerance and their unity of Socialist forces is at an end. A leading Hungarian theoretician stated a few months ago that Eastern Europe was now definitely embarking on the tougher, harsher period of Proletarian Dictatorship. We ought therefore not be surprised to hear that good and loyal Socialists, who could have lived in comfort in the West but who preferred to risk everything in order to work for the new order in their country, have been invited home, only to be arrested on trumped up charges by their Communist colleagues lest Moscow should be able to say that any Western influence remains to corrupt the purity of their subservience to the Kremlin.

Once Communism appealed to idealism. Many thousands, outside the disciplined ranks of the Party, accept the Marxist analysis and agree that as capitalism staggers on from crisis to crisis, Socialists must be organised and ready to take power. They are eager to join in a common policy of opposition to imperialist war preparation. But to-day they ask whether an international Party which never consults its constituent parties, which itself threatens war on the small satellite without even discussing the issue at a Party congress, which proceeds without reference to the needs or position of the working class throughout the West—whether in fact such a party is now leading towards international Socialism? All these and many other difficulties confront the Western Marxists who realise the danger of splitting with Moscow. The greatest of all their difficulties, however, arises from Moscow's present view that everything to do with the West is bourgeois, which means in effect a declaration of war not only on capitalists and imperialists but on all workers who, oddly enough in the West, have Western minds. It is part of this Western mind, probably an irradicable part, to believe in standing by one's friends even when they are in trouble. Western Communists have to make up their minds to work with other Socialists, in the knowledge that they may at any time, at a hint from the Kremlin, be compelled to repudiate, betray and, if necessary, bear false witness against their comrades. In the long run the one absolute deterrent to becoming a Communist is, in my view, the fear of hearing a voice from the grave echo the refrain: "I had a comrade."

KINGSLEY MARTIN

A LONDON DIARY

LORD BEAVERBROOK'S crusades are like V-bombs. Their blast effects are far greater than their powers of political demolition. It is no doubt a nuisance for Lord Woolton, just before the Annual Rally, to be denounced by the noisiest press lord as a renegade and traitor to true-blue Conservatism. But the concrete round Conservative headquarters is strong enough to withstand the shock. Baldwin once survived a combined onslaught by the *Mail* and the *Express* and was not moved when "the Beaver" put up his own candidates and actually got one of them in. (Admiral Taylor, M.P. survives to this day as the lone relic of this escapade.) What is new this time is that the attack is delivered not against the Party Leader but on his behalf. Beaverbrook is a fervent supporter of a National Government headed by Mr. Churchill and himself and, of course, by Brendan Bracken, "the greatest First Lord of the Admiralty there's been" as he put it in 1945. He believes that the main obstacle to defeating the Socialists is the Tory Party itself and in particular the "intellectuals" like Butler, MacMillan and Eccles who conscientiously believe that Europe exists and that Conservatism needs a policy as well as a leader. "Scrap the lot," is the advice of Beaverbrook and Bracken to Mr. Churchill, and pin your faith to the old firm of B. B. and C. We will win the working-class vote by promising a £6 national minimum, and no P.A.Y.E., and after that, over a bottle of brandy, we'll soon think up a new series of "blood, toil and sweat orations" which is all that the Old Country really needs.

* * *

I am sure that Mr. Churchill finds the company and the ideas of Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Bracken far more stimulating than the meetings of his official shadow Cabinet which is always bleating that it would like to be consulted by the Leader before he makes another epoch-making declaration of policy. In fact, he despises most of his colleagues on the Front Bench as much as they distrust him. As Aneurin Bevan reminded the House of Commons the other day in his memorable speech, it was the Labour Party which made Mr. Churchill Prime Minister, and, even in June and July, 1940, when he achieved true greatness, he was received with stony silence by his own side every time he entered the House. On the Conservative benches those who cheered him were only the group of cronies who had formerly shared the wilderness with him. On the other hand, as he likes to remind Mr. Eden from time to time, Mr. Gladstone became Prime Minister when he was over 80. If Mr. Churchill is to repeat this achievement, he needs the official Tory machine as much as it needs him. Moreover, he probably remembers that he did not do so very well in 1945 when he fought the election along the lines recommended by B. and B. So this time, with typical whimsicality, he has taken not Lord Beaverbrook's advice—but Arthur Deakin's!

* * *

I see that the storm over American strategy, which has been rumbling round the back rooms of Washington for months, has now broken in a public Congressional inquiry. The row started when senior naval officers, piqued by cuts in their establishment, circulated reports that the decision to build B.36 bombers was prompted by graft in high places. But there is much more to it than that. America has not yet decided what kind of war it expects to fight. The Air Force, with the backing of Defence Secretary Johnson, has been pinning its faith on the B.36 and the atom bomb. Yet we now have the odd spectacle of American admirals quoting, almost word for word, some of Professor Blackett's arguments against atom bombing. "Inefficient," says one. "The push-button myth," adds another. Professional jealousies have played their part in this conversion. To judge from the evidence offered by the naval strategists, one would think they were high-principled opponents of atom bombing. Not so. Secretary Johnson, earlier this year, scrapped the Navy's super-carrier. Up till then the Navy had argued that carrier aircraft could most effectively drop the bomb on Russia. Now, deprived of this honour, it retaliates on the Air Force. The B.36 bomber, the sailors argue, is a white elephant. It may fail to reach its distant targets in Russia: if it does, it may not do the damage the atom enthusiasts expect. If the U.S. is to fight a defensive war, it will not need long-distance bombers. If it fights overseas, it will need the Navy. This row, I suspect, may have the advantage of shaking the widespread American faith in the easy and economical knock-out blow.

* * *

I am not surprised that both India and Pakistan complain of the lack of publicity given to their affairs in the British Press. India, as we say, is "in the news" this week because Pandit Nehru, who always has personal news value, is passing through on his way to Washington where the issue seems to be whether he can maintain India's proclaimed policy of neutrality or whether the price of the aid America offers is, in effect, that India becomes part of the anti-Soviet bloc. The sort of thing that India would have liked to see in the press would have been an explanation of why she refused the Truman-Attlee proposal to make Nimitz arbitrator in Kashmir. Delhi's point is a strong one. India accepted Nimitz as the man to supervise a plebiscite after cease-fire and truce conditions had been agreed. She did not agree to Nimitz as an "arbitrator," with no precise terms of reference, appointed to dictate the terms of a settlement which the parties would be bound to accept. India points out that even the terms of the "truce" have never been agreed—Pakistan is still complaining about the disposition of Indian troops, and India declares that, in spite of the Commission's decision, the Azad-Kashmir forces have not been disbanded. The Kashmir position is further complicated just now by a strange incident in which Lieut.-General Delvoie, Military Advisor to the Uno Commission, is accused of having used a special U.N. plane to remove to Rawalpindi in Pakistan private property from a safe deposit in Srinagar. I know nothing of the rights and wrongs of this complaint, but it looks like a nice bit of scandal which the press could usually have been relied upon to report.

* * *

The charming review of Priestley's *Delight*, which appeared in this journal last week, must have been about the last thing that Robert Lynd wrote. It is strange to think that it was also the first occasion that I recall of his own signature appearing in this journal. As Y.Y. all the world knew him; almost every week for a quarter of a century his essays maintained their quality. His arrival was always an event. At the last minute—but never later—he slipped into the office keeping the taxi ticking at the door, while, with a comical apology for being even later than usual, he handed in a manuscript that only one compositor could read. (This particular compositor, an excellent friend of mine to-day, is proud of the fact that he, for years, spent a large part of one night each week deciphering Y.Y.). Robert Lynd was one of the most lovable men I have ever met. On the personal side I need add little to the tributes of Mr. Desmond MacCarthy and other friends. There are two aspects of Lynd, however, which I have not seen discussed in his obituaries. The first is his revolutionary past. I must certainly get someone in Ireland to look up his early Nationalist pamphlets. My second comment is that Lynd was at heart a Bohemian. He liked irregular hours, and he liked, above all, to sit in a pub with a glass at his elbow and talk endlessly with other men who had good talk inside them. Odd though it may sound, I should say that in some ways there was a strong resemblance between Lynd and G. K. Chesterton. One was as spare as the other was elephantine. One was a Protestant and the other a Catholic. The one was an egotist, a shower-off; the other was modest and, in manner,

shy. One looked like a scholar-saint and the other a Falstaff. But as journalists they had the same respect for letters and habit of regarding journalism as an authentic type of literature; they had the same kindness and love of talk; and the same insatiable appetite for both the intellectual and physical pleasures in life. CRITIC

LEFT TURN

"Mr. Churchill's Colonist II sustained . . . defeat . . . at Lingfield Park yesterday . . . it was unlikely that any horse of Mr. Churchill's would take kindly to going left."—The Times, Oct. 7.

At such a time as this, alert electors,
Surveying signs and portents in the skies,
Proclaim conclusions based on wild surmise,
And wallow in a welter of conjectures.
But, when predicting the electoral course,
Straws in the wind are not to be neglected,
And party calculations are affected
By the strange case of Mr. Churchill's horse.

While both sides haunt informed prognostication
By horoscopes, or other means occult,
On firmer ground they forecast the result
Through evidence of equine aberration.
A ray of light in darkness they discern,
One pointer which at least is not misleading,
One floodlight in futurity, proceeding
From Mr. Churchill's horse's Leftward turn.

From Tory trial gallups, form and training,
No runners in the race have swerved aside,
But faithfully obeyed the Party guide,
True products of Conservative campaigning;
But Lingfield Park revealed a party cleft,
As if, the Right-wing Tories to disable,
Lord Beaverbrook invaded Woolton's stable,
And prompted Churchill's horse to take the Left.

In pre-election fogs and storms and blizzards,
And huge convulsions in the course of nature
(Foreboding change in Britain's legislature
Announced by Tory oracles and wizards)
One fact proves their pretensions have no base—
Their hope forlorn to steal the Labour thunder;
The Leftward turn for Tories is a blunder,
Since Churchill's horse went Left, *and lost the race.*

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed. Paste entries on a POSTCARD.

On the subject of the approaching General Election, Mrs. Mew thought that there was still the possibility that it might come this year, and, it should not be forgotten that it had been said the next election might be the last. Passports, controls, and many taxes were in direct contravention to Magna Carta, and could be said to be, in fact, illegal. Was Magna Carta to be repealed, or were these bad laws?—Report in *Horley Advertiser.* (G. J. Farmer-Little.)

Gone, unfortunately, are the days when independent incomes assured us of a Parliament mirroring our feelings.—Letter in *Evening Standard.* (W. Tyldesley.)

"It is perhaps significant that whereas the Communist Manifesto of Marx and Engels published in 1848 was, to say the least, open to the suspicion of preaching violent revolution, in 1948 I compiled a book of speeches which has this year been published under the title of 'The Peaceful Revolution.'"—Speech by Herbert Morrison reported in *Daily Worker.* (ABC.)

I'm experimenting on a perfume specially for men at the moment. It's difficult. I'm trying to capture a scent like the aroma of a fresh cup of tea.—*Daily Mirror.* (Zoë L. Anstey.)

"Y.Y."

WHEN, on the morning after Robert Lynd died, the Editor asked me to write an article about him, I felt grateful. Lynd and I had written for this journal ever since it started in April, 1913, and it was only yesterday—or so it seemed to the foreshortening memory of an old man—that we had been together on its staff; he as "Y.Y.," that amusing, unpredictable, contemplative commentator on anything and everything; I, as its dramatic critic. Of course, there was no other paper in which I would have liked as much to write about my friend, and the opportunity coming at that moment was to me almost like a piece of good news. Then, presently, I made a disconcerting discovery; I did not want to write an article about Robert after all. When death had suddenly brought him so near to me and taken him so far away, what I wanted to write was something I could not write—a poem about him! He was a man whom one would like to describe as a poet might remember him.

Perhaps some reading these lines at this moment read last week H. M. Tomlinson's beautiful tribute to him in the *News Chronicle.* If they did, they will have noticed how different it was from most obituary notices. I have not, alas, Tomlinson's gift for writing lyrical prose; I can only say things like this: that during the many years I knew Robert Lynd I was never in his company, even on brief occasions, without being aware that he was a good man—sensible, laughter-loving, humble, kind; both happy and sad as only affectionate people are; both penetrating and merciful in his judgments as only the clever who are not conceited can be. It seems almost indelicate to praise him: on behalf of so modest a man we should be modest.

Of course, he was aware of his own merits as a writer; he knew when he wrote well, and when he was doing his job well as journalist or as editor. Humility when genuine never excludes a just estimate of one's own gifts or achievements; indeed, without self-respect it is either a kind of emotional grovelling which is not beautiful at all, or only an indirect way of courting praise. Lynd did not think of himself as a great writer crippled by having to earn his living as a journalist, but as a good writer who knew that journalism also affords opportunities to "the artist." His contributions to THE NEW STATESMAN were most valuable to the paper. They were places of rest in its pages. In his essays his readers found relaxation from didactic urgency and analytical intellectual strenuousness. "Y.Y." reminded them each week, for many years, that life is not made up only of causes and crises; that living is not only a matter of arriving at right conclusions about politics, books, plays, economics, pictures, music, statesmen, but also something which—however important all those things are—has to be enjoyed; and that response to its odd and often fascinating variety is necessary to living fully. To remind us of this is the function of the discursive essayist; but he cannot fulfil it without writing about himself and recording his personal experience. And it was here that Lynd's virtues, which I have called by their names—fairness, humour, affection, quick perception and humility—stood him in good stead as an artist. They prevented his "self" from becoming unduly obtrusive in his essays, which is apt to happen sometimes in the work of finer essayists than he. We get tired of the man behind the essay, even if at first we delighted in him; we get tired even of the coaxing charm of Lamb or the demands for sympathy of Hazlitt.

English literature is particularly rich in essayists. Although the first modern discursive personal essayist was a Frenchman, Montaigne, England has excelled in this branch of literature. The work of Robert Lynd deserves to be remembered; posterity will lose something worth having if none of it is preserved. But how to help its survival? Competitors, even among his contemporaries, are not a few and their names will readily suggest themselves. Some of them have more original minds, though they are not often better company. There is no longer a concentrated literary public which discriminates for all, such as in the past decided that, say, Richard Steele was worth remembering as well as Addison, Leigh Hunt as well as Lamb and Hazlitt. (By the way, none of Hazlitt's many essays was reprinted till he had been dead fifty years, so if Robert Lynd is not read for a while after his death it does not mean he will never be read again.) To-day, there is such a crush of competitors at the doors of the Temple of Fame that it looks as if it would be a toss-up who gets in. If Robert Lynd had lived a hundred years ago, I think he would have been sure of a modest little niche, for another hundred, in English literature.

What might help—and I am not merely thinking of my friend, whose attitude towards fame was a smiling detachment more easily learnt in Fleet Street than in the study, but also of the general reader—what might help would be a Lynd volume in Everyman's Library which would include some of his most characteristic Y.Y.s, a few of his travel sketches and literary criticisms, and that short book, *Dr. Johnson and Company.* This book was not recognised as one of the best contributions to an inexhaustible theme only because it was not based on original research, but, better, on insight. Such a volume might give pleasure to thousands now and in years to come to others. DESMOND MACCARTHY

RED SHANGHAI

(From a Correspondent)

THE river is empty, cars have almost disappeared from the roads, and at every street corner there stand one or two olive-clad soldiers, guns at the ready. Otherwise outwardly there seems little change in Shanghai. But there has been a revolution. Read the new laws and regulations, read the *Liberation Daily* and the *New Culture Magazine*, and you'll be told all about it.

The Communists are ruling Shanghai with a firm hand. If you play Mah Jong you will be made to sweep the streets, and if you want to travel you need a permit, and if you talk out of line you will be prosecuted as a rumour-monger. Also the Government may send you off to some God-forsaken place in the interior to repair dykes or help build up the rural areas. This regimentation seems to be an almost inevitable by-product of an attempted rapid industrialisation in a backward country. It is all the more inevitable in this country so full of rugged individualists if any sort of industrial order is to be created out of the present chaos. And coming right down to it: to the great majority of the Chinese there can be no loss of freedom. Because what freedom did the peasant or coolie ever have? And if the Kuomintang dictatorship did not interfere with the personal freedom of the better-off that was due rather to its bribe-ridden Civil Service than any love for democracy.

Of course, all the old economic problems remain. But the currency has found its level after its first serious weakening in July. It is a very precarious level, depending paradoxically enough on the Nationalist blockade of Shanghai.

U.S. dollar notes cannot be smuggled, there is no trade, hence no demand for foreign currency, hence no rise in the exchange rates. On the other hand, the prices of commodities went just about as high as they will ever go in terms of foreign currency until the closing of factories and the unemployment reduced the buying power of the people to almost nil; hence prices came down slightly and have temporarily stuck there.

While war goes on it will be impossible to prevent inflation, and afterwards the authorities will be faced with the old export dilemma. Production costs, because of high wages (comparative) and bad communications, combined with high raw material costs, make exports unprofitable unless there is a realistic exchange rate. But a realistic exchange rate emphasises inflation and is opposed to the Communists' principle of basing their currency on internal products rather than on what they consider the "colonial" basis of U.S. dollars or precious metals. Therefore, to export—and they do have to export—to pay for their much-needed cotton, oil, etc., they must subsidise their factories, and this, in its turn, encourages the inflation. The real solution lies in the efficient industrialisation of China, but as stop-gaps the Communists will no doubt try a rigid price-fixing programme, an export-import link system, straight barter trade and high taxation. The last-named they are doing already quite thoroughly, which is one of the main reasons for the decline in their popularity. They are not only taxing luxuries (tax on a private car for three months amounts to U.S. $150, while there is a two-dollar tax on each gallon of petrol, which accounts for Shanghai's empty streets, but are also taxing staple commodities quite steeply, and effectively withdrawing idle money from the market.

The Communists have another reason for welcoming the Nationalist blockade of Shanghai. Their avowed aim is to reduce Shanghai to a second-class port. To them Shanghai is the symbol of China's "subservience to imperialism" and they intend to reduce its population by half inside three years. Ideology apart, this is sound sense. Shanghai acquired its unique position in the Far East because of the international settlements, which assured protection to both Chinese and foreign investments. Many of Shanghai's industries are just extensions of industries of overseas countries built here without regard to raw material supplies, which in many cases had to be transported awkwardly for huge distances, the finished goods then being transported back to where the raw materials came from originally. By closing down factories and causing unemployment the blockade is making it easier for the Communists to persuade people to leave Shanghai, although in the majority of cases it is a forced evacuation which is causing a lot of hardship and heartbreak.

I believe that the foreigners here, and especially the Americans, are much too pessimistic about possibilitites of trade. China needs foreign trade, and it will only be a question of who is going to do the trading, the Government or private individuals. No doubt, foreign firms will gradually be squeezed out of China, but considering the immense holdings of the bigger firms this process will take time, more time than most people think at the moment. The effective Nationalist blockade has been psychologically very depressing; but, with the example of Tientsin where a small but vigorous foreign trade has been going on for the last three months, Chinese traders on the whole are very optimistic. They have been promised a certain amount of free enterprise for a considerable period, and both they and the smaller manufacturers are looking forward to a renewed reasonable prosperity. The Communists have been making a point of getting together with what they call national-capitalists, and that they are sincere about it is proved by the many admissions of mistakes made in the North, where they almost killed all industry by their ultra-Left methods, which, incidentally, were corrected by the Russians. The other day there was a most interesting report about Port Arthur and Dairen which can be taken as a typical instance of what happened after the takeover of big cities two or three years ago. The Communists, who had no experience of city government at all, decided to treat the cities like the land. They parcelled it out to the coolies. And it took them a long time to realise that a modern city cannot be run like a Chinese village.

The joint operation of Sino-Soviet factories opened their eyes. The Russian managements apparently know as much about capitalism as the best of us, and the first thing they did was to re-introduce a graded wage system where, before, the labourers and the management had been getting the same wages. They explained to their Chinese comrades that production and wealth must be increased first before you can start sharing it. It is this harsh experience which has turned the ultra-Communists, economically at least, into bourgeois capitalists. Their whole attitude in internal politics is one of extreme caution as regards any rapid reforms and their propaganda never misses an opportunity to condemn the ultra-Leftists. Their main objectives at the moment are to get a government going, a government which will have a staff of incorruptible Civil Servants and will not be too proud to learn how to govern.

FRENCH CANADIAN DILEMMA

(From a Correspondent)

FRENCH Canada has maintained its national identity for more than two hundred years on the triple base of religion, language, and antagonism to *Les Anglais*. (*Les Anglais* usually means English Canadians rather than English, though the latter are by no means excluded from French Canadian resentment.) With the transformation of Quebec, centre of national feeling, from an agricultural to a great industrial province, and the accompanying change from far-away British to nearby American control of industry, the ground has shifted under all three of those supports. The result is naturally a desperate effort to shore them up, a pretty thorough heart-searching as to the value of French Canadian culture and the means of preserving it.

The clerical ideal for Quebec, long preached from every pulpit, has been the farm family of many children, the father devout, stern, dependable, the mother content and submissive in her home, the sons growing up to be priest, lawyer, farmer, the daughters marrying neighbouring farmers or entering a convent. That ideal has long been impossible to realise, for lack of new land wherein to expand. There are no young *habitants*. The sons and grandsons of those quaint characters, who could neither read nor write and depended on the *curé* for all guidance, now listen to the daily agricultural report on the radio, market their produce through co-operatives that they help run, or work as mechanics and labourers in city factories On the farm the old ceremonies are fulfilled, the prayers for rain and the blessing of the crops, but the modern Quebec farmer thinks it no sin to help the Lord out with dust mulch and fertilizer—when he can afford it. Neither, as a matter of fact, does the *curé*.

Daughters and granddaughters of the old women who baked their bread in outdoor ovens and wove their own cloth now are typists in offices, workers in textile mills and shoe factories. The change in the position of women marks step by step the silent revolution in Quebec. French Canadian girls are doctors, lawyers, labour leaders, business women. They agitate to reform the antiquated laws that govern the married woman's status.

The Church has had to meet the new demands, or lose its hold. When, in spite of admonitions, French Canadian girls went to work in offices, one of Montreal's big convents set up training courses that turn out the best bi-lingual secretaries in the city. Priests at Laval University and elsewhere have taken the lead in establishing market and consumers' co-operatives. The Catholic Syndicates are no longer content to negotiate agreements with employers on employers' terms and accept an annual donation to the St. Jean Baptiste Day parade in lieu of fair wages and job security. They fight. Father Camirand of the town of Asbestos was the heart and soul of the recent strike against the American Johns-Manville Co. which, now that it is settled, seems to have become in retrospect a struggle with Premier Duplessis' Provincial Police. He was upheld by both archbishops, and his own bishop has just issued a statement to the effect that everything the police say about him is a lie. In all such movements religion and nationalism are inextricably entangled. *Maclean's* magazine quotes the wife of an Asbestos striker to a friend whose husband went back to work during the strike, "Has he left the Church?" That is a far cry from the days of the aluminium strike in 1943, when the Syndicate local was used to break an A.F. of L. strike with the help of the local clergy.

Language, not religion, is the distinguishing mark of the French Canadian. All French are presumed to be Catholic, though many more of them are anti-clerical than either Church or State authorities care to admit. The Church controls education, through the Quebec system of separate schools, and thus takes the responsibility for keeping both language and religion pure. It is a hard struggle, against the overwhelming tide of American movies—the big movie theatres are part of U.S. chains—picture magazines, tourists, factory foremen and bosses. No French Canadian has a chance of a good job or a profit in business unless he speaks both languages.

Nothing now in sight can stop the infusion of English. Canadian French is at bottom 17th-century Norman; its remnants of old phrases, *icitte* instead of *ici*, *debarquer* and *embarquer* for *descendre* and *monter*, and others of that sort, merely make it sound a little odd, like Glasgow English. What makes it a jargon is the appearance of English words with French endings in almost every spoken sentence, and often in written ones. The radio performer must be able to understand, "Watchez-vous le clock." The clerk in the store is told, "J'veux payer cash." The garage mechanic has to "fixer les brakes, regarder les tires." The butcher hears his customer say, "Donnez-moi d'ham tenderizé." The girl at the party has *beaucoup du fun*. A conscious battle goes on to counteract this debasement of language. Clergy and teachers work hard to inculcate the beauty and value of French. French classics are the models in the schools—but most modern French writing is taboo because of its pagan trend. French Canada has no great love for France; it is no mother country. French Canadians are Canadians who happen to speak

French. But how long they will continue to speak it is an alarming question.

The French Canadian minority in the U.S., some two million strong, has proved the least assimilable of all those flung into the melting-pot. Because Quebec is near, it has been able to keep the loyalty of its children who have gone to New England and the West. The third generation, however, is usually lost in the American public schools. Thus the fight over Federal aid to parochial schools in the U.S. is eagerly watched in Quebec. This past summer the Comité de la Survivance Française en Amerique staged a pilgrimage to several New England textile towns and to Acadia in Nova Scotia. The old songs were sung, the people were urged to speak French at home, to support French schools. In the Canadian West, St. Boniface in Manitoba and Edmonton in Saskatchewan are centres of French Canadian life, for some 600,000 people. The fight for French radio stations in the West has enlisted all the patriotism of Quebec. Thus the authorities in the old province are constantly striving to hold tight their offspring.

The resistance to American infiltration in Quebec has softened the feeling against England in some quarters; after all, they reason, it may be a good thing to keep the British connection as a counterweight. Other French Canadians think union with the U.S. is desirable, because of its superiority in mechanical power. "Americans get things done," they say, without considering just how valuable are the things done, and at what expense. The older nationalists wanted a separate Laurentia. Nowadays that is forgotten, and the talk is of a Republic of Canada, perhaps along the lines of India.

Necessarily the observer asks: is this culture, so stubbornly defended by those who share it, worth preserving? The answer must be yes, unless we believe that only our own language can express human aspirations. French Canadian culture is an active, living, rebellious spirit, capable of creation in the theatre, in painting, in writing, and to some extent in music. Young men and women are painting, often violently, crudely, experimentally, but sometimes with great beauty. Paul-Emile Borduas, abstractionist and magnificent colourist, lost his teaching post in a school supported by the provincial government because he had a part in issuing a manifesto called *Refus Global*, which stated the creed of the free artist and urged that French Canadian painters break away from the restrictions imposed by Church and State. Cosgrove, de Tonnancourt, Jori Smith, Pellan, and dozens of others are very fine painters becoming known in Paris and New York.

In writing, the whole atmosphere has changed within ten years. The conventional romance of the country lover, the return to the soil, is still written, still published, but all life has gone out of it. The best writing—and the best-selling novels—find their source in the city working world. A best-seller, *The Tin Flute*, was the story of a scrounging, cheating little waitress in the 5-and-10, of peasant people miserable in a city slum. Roger Lemelin's novels of Quebec, *Au Pied de la Pente Douce* and *Les Plousses*, picture the effect on French Canadian living of the drive into industry and the American penetration. French Canadian newspapers give ample space to reviews of serious books, to music and drama criticism, for their readers find such matters important.

The movies are the most recent medium for French Canadian expression. With the appearance of *Un Homme et Son Péché*, taken from the radio serial of the same name, which is an established part of Quebec's daily routine, French Canadians saw their traditional way of life faithfully presented. Made for little outlay, acted by local people, it tells the simple story of a girl whose father made her marry an old miser, and who stayed a dutiful wife; while her lover, without too much grieving, marries a younger girl. No blinking the harshness of the scene, but plenty of local colour in corn-huskings and village talk.

So long as French Canada has the vitality to produce such work, so long as its working people fight for better homes and health, French Canada remains a valuable sector of the North American scene, a nation seeking to realise its full freedom. When it succeeds, its dilemma will be resolved.

POLICE COURT LAWYER

You may be a regular reader of those chatty columns in the evening papers in which Police Court proceedings are described. "Kind old Mr. Snodgrass," the report usually ends, "beamed through his spectacles and Florrie was led away to the cells to continue to battle for her rights under the British Constitution on a more removed ground." The atmosphere the report conveys is one of Dickensian charm mingled with occasional bursts of musical comedy. For the practitioner in the London police courts, the picture seems somewhat different.

A general practice at the Bar will usually start you off in police courts, and you may have sampled a good many of them before you rise to higher things. To reach most of these courts a long and complex journey must be undertaken, and as no human power can prognosticate at what time any particular case will be heard, it is as well to set out immediately after breakfast, although you will be lucky if you get home before lunch. On arrival, you enter the court immediately and sidle up to a policeman who holds a very long list indeed. He is the Warrant Officer and will be able to tell you when, if ever, your case will be reached. He bawls a number, a figure is slid into the dock, the magistrate's clerk starts to thunder away on a typewriter inadequately silenced by the lid of a cardboard box, a plain-clothes detective gives evidence with that contemptuous detachment of which plain-clothes detectives are masters; the magistrate, if he is a recent appointment, looks slightly bewildered, if not, he sinks into his chair and opens one eye. This is the moment to whisper your question to the Warrant Officer—"When will I be on?"

"Lucky if it's before lunch—he's got twenty urinating in public, six assaults and a dangerous driving."

"Thank you." You sidle out.

The way to fill in the time is either by seeing your client or drinking tea in the gaoler's office. Being conscientious, you see your client who is found, if the case is a civil one, in a long, bare passage outside; or, in criminal cases, locked into a room which contains a number of iron stalls furnished with what appear to be lavatory seats. It often happens that your client is a young woman come to apply for maintenance for her child, or a Separation Order. She may never have seen the inside of a court before—in that case it is difficult to reassure her and keep her cheerful in an atmosphere in which her purely personal and emotional troubles are heard among assaults and indecencies, and her comfort, such as it is, is attended to by a character who, however kindly, often looks like a spare-time warder from Holloway.

In the cells, however, the atmosphere is less strained and slightly more convivial. Chatting to an old man of seventy who has had fifty-three previous convictions for indecency, one can discuss the case almost with detachment:

"I hope we'll get you off."

"Never mind, sir, Brixton's not too bad, not at this time of year. Perhaps they'll give me that cosy job in the canteen again. The only thing I worry about is who'll feed my budgerigar. The police are such terrible liars . . ."

It's all very pleasant, but one can't go on discussing the case interminably; one's approach loses its freshness, the mind becomes clogged with a mass of unimportant detail. Finally one seeks refuge in the gaoler's office.

In there, if you are well-known to the enormous constable who billows over the high office stool, they will offer you a cup of tea and you can gossip with the local solicitor who is the best known figure of this particular court. Every police court in London has a similar Attorney-General; a spry, astute, leathery little lawyer retained by the local barrow-boys, tarts and butchers, who conducts his cases with great zeal and vaguely in accordance with the rules of procedure.

At last your case will be called; you will cram yourself into the little box reserved for you and start to tell the magistrate the facts. From then on a terrible rumour will spread from the clerk to the police and thence to the Bench that you are going to be "long." To be "long" is an unpardonable sin in most Metropolitan Police Courts with their enormously overburdened lists. Any threat of it will cause the magistrate to break your case off in the middle and adjourn it to some remote date when the chances are you will be engaged somewhere else anyway. A magistrate on a hot day has been known to adjourn an assault case for six weeks because one of the parties refused to be bound over, and wanted the facts tried; no doubt he thought the expense of an adjournment would teach the unwise litigant the meaning of Summary Jurisdiction.

You start, then, trying to tell the magistrate all the facts and at the same time to give the impression of a nice sense of urgency, but the speed of the proceedings is slowed up by the fact that there is no shorthand note and the clerk has to crash all the evidence down as best he can on his typewriter. In general, you will receive less courtesy from the Bench than you would in the High Court, and in general you will have a difficult task if you are for a wife complaining of her husband's cruelty, unless you actually bring her into court on a stretcher. Apart from that, the procedure is as at any trial without a jury, and a knowledge of the magistrate concerned is a help; police court lawyers can learn which Bench is sympathetic to women, which will forgive a man anything if he's been in the army, and which is interested, above all, in making some theoretical pronouncement which will be headlined in the evening papers. Thus, with nicely judged tact and every appearance of speed, the accomplished police court lawyer will attempt to whisk his client out of the arms of the Law, being careful to choke off any attempt to make a long-winded explanation from the witness box. He will be met outside, even if successful, less with gratitude than with resentment at not having brought out the whole story of the next door neighbour's stolen wireless set, the husband's mother's drinking habits, or the endless duplicity of the police.

So the police court lawyer catches his 'bus from Old Street or Stoke Newington or Stepney and goes home. If there were more courts, or less crime, his job would be easier. If matrimonial cases could be heard, as juvenile cases are, in a separate court so that magistrates didn't regard husbands and wives with the same eye

as they regard drunkards and prostitutes, much would be simplified. If the lists were not so full, the care and courtesy of a newly appointed magistrate would not develop so swiftly into the brusque and summary manner of an old hand.

The police court lawyer nods. To-morrow he's got to appear before a bench of lay magistrates out at Little Hatchem. There anything may happen, but at least it will happen slowly. His eye, before closing completely, catches his neighbour's evening paper: "Kind old Mr. Snodgrass," he reads, "beamed through his spectacles . . ." BARRISTER

ONE KIND OF GOOD LIFE

THE new site was high up in the Gallilean hills, with hostile frontiers a mile or two away on the North and East. It was a wild, bleak place, the reddish chocolate soil strewn with pale boulders and almost hidden by millions of stones. The sky was low and dark, a cold, strong wind blew steadily, and it had been raining; cocoa-coloured water was still trickling away down the slopes, exposing yet more white, dead-looking flints, a textbook picture of soil erosion.

The *kibbutz* hadn't been going for long. So far it was mostly tents. Of course, the cowshed and an armoury had been put up immediately, and now they had a just-completed prefab. dining hall, immaculate and shiny inside except for the inescapable chocolate mud footprinted across the new linoleum.

Sploshing around in the mud, slightly blue with cold, were the settlers, about forty young men and girls. They had all come from other *kibbutzim*, had been born and brought up in the country, and were veterans of the Arab war. Now they were building their own settlement.

They hadn't even any water supply as yet; it all had to be fetched from the valley, up the rough mountain road, in lorries. These spring rains were not much help, they only washed the soil away. Serious farming couldn't begin until they had a pipeline. In the meantime they had to clear the ground of stones and boulders; it looked a fabulous task but they seemed quite confident that they would cope with it. In a few years time, they told me, the place would be unrecognisable, just like any other established *kibbutz*, with pleasant buildings, trees, lawns, running water, fertile fields all round. And there would be children.

It began to rain again. Their clothes were already soaked, and I thought of how it would be later, knocking off from work in wet clothes and going back to sleep in a wet tent. They were cheerful enough though, and they had a sort of solid, mature self-confidence remarkable amongst any collection of young people. They were not like any of the conventional conceptions of Jewish youth. They could only be understood in relation to their background.

Their background was the *kibbutz*, the Jewish communal settlement, a special sort of community, without money, without punishments or compulsions, autonomous and responsible to no outside body. There are about three hundred of these settlements in Israel to-day, of varying sizes and degrees of development. Some live by agriculture alone, while many also run small industrial undertakings, fish hatcheries, motor transport services, and so forth. But, whatever their source of income, no one works for wages. The *kibbutz* is responsible for the full maintenance of its members and their dependents. Food is prepared and eaten communally, and all the settlement's consumption goods are got from the store, by asking for them. It is literally "each according to his needs." With the proviso that the needs have to be somewhat restricted. But they are not restricted in accordance with anyone's contribution to the settlement, only by the settlement's prosperity.

It all sounds rather too good to be true. And on my first visit to one of the more established settlements, I thought it really did look like propaganda. Those sturdy girls in shorts hoeing away in the vegetable gardens, the smiling tractor drivers, the wide landscape of fertile fields, the tree-shaded bungalows surrounded by lawns and flowers, the workers singing in the fields—it could be the pay-off to a film about somebody's Five Year Plan.

"But what," I asked, "do you do about the dull and unrewarding jobs, like cleaning the lavatories?"

The secretary grinned. "People always want to know that." He was a tall, thin Yugoslav, with a tough, intelligent-looking face. He spoke excellent English, having learned it in the army as a paratrooper before he was dropped into Yugoslavia. "We don't have that attitude to work" he said. "No jobs have any special prestige. And none are looked down upon either—except mine, maybe."

"That sounds fine—but who *does* clean the lavatories then?"

"It's on a rota. Everybody takes a turn about once in every nine or ten months. We know it's not the most economic use of labour power, but we don't always work according to the most economic plan. The banana plantations for instance, they're our most profitable crop. We'd make far more money if we turned all our land over to bananas. But it's a type of work that wouldn't suit a lot of our people, and it's too heavy for the women. We try to allocate jobs according to social as well as economic considerations. That's why we try to avoid specialisation, so that most members have experience of working at all the basic jobs of the *kibbutz* . . ."

He went on to talk about the children—"*our* children" he called them. About a third of the *kibbutz* budget was spent on them, and thirty adults worked full-time teaching and looking after the settlement's hundred-odd children. As he said, it wasn't economic. But it paid in many ways. The children, living in a community of their own, eating and sleeping in special children's houses, in a glorified sort of progressive school atmosphere, were splendid—healthy, sturdy looking, with a wonderful, fearless self-confidence. Those young men and women starting the new settlement up in the hills were the profit on this system.

They, like the founders of all the other settlements, were moved by "ideological" considerations. Facing the same struggles and hardships as any other bunch of pioneering settlers (the Americans had Red Indians as well, but then the *kibbutzim* have had to cope with the Arabs all the time and the British some of the time) the type of organisation imposed upon them by their ideals is the best possible guarantee of their success. That the sort of community they have been able to establish also corresponds to ideals held by large numbers of other people, elsewhere, doesn't necessarily prove much. A special type of person and special Jewish circumstances have been involved. Christianity was another Palestinian-Jewish invention. But it was a very long way from there to the Vatican and Lambeth Palace.

Of course, ideology alone can't make the *kibbutzim* work. The *character* of the individuals in it is important; the success of a *kibbutz* and the individual member's happiness requires a difficult kind of personal adjustment to communal living that many people are unable to make. Life is public, not only in the sense that normally private activities such as eating or washing are carried out in communal buildings, but also much that elsewhere would be private responsibilities here tend to be public ones, to the community rather than the individual or his family.

Many people in Israel, who would shrink from the thought of living in a *kibbutz* themselves, none the less approve strongly of its ideas. And though the settlements are politically Left, their social and economic implications profoundly anti-capitalist, none the less they have the blessing of the most capitalist and Right-wing elements in the country too, who recognise that much of the new State's prosperity and defence has to be based upon them. The building of new settlements on the frontiers is strategically essential, and it is only the tough idealism of the young *kibbutzniks* that can succeed in establishing them.

There will have to be many more new *kibbutzim*. What will happen then is hard to say. The difficulty is not just a question of the contradictions inherent in developing a Socialist agriculture in a capitalist state. The *kibbutzim* are producing a new kind of *person*—educated, progressive-minded and proletarianised agriculturalists, whose standards of living and demands upon life are not those of any other workers on the land—or anywhere else either. Their numbers can only grow slowly, and in the meantime a vast mass of new immigrants is coming in; the gulf between these people and the *kibbutzniks* is enormous.

But whatever happens I don't think those youngsters on their bleak Gallilean hilltop will fail. They, and the others, in the wastes of the Negev and the barren frontier areas, will transform their waste lands into fields and gardens, and in the process will be accomplishing much more than that. Leaving the hilltop settlement I thought of the wind and cold and then the long, parched scorching summer to come, of all the hardships of the way they were living now and the hardships that lay ahead of them. And I envied them. They had something to work for, confidence and belief in a future that lay in their own hands, a good life. JOHN SOMMERFIELD

ABSOLUTELY FRANK

FIVE thousand people of seventy-one nations have passed through Caux-sur-Montreux this summer. They come to study Moral Re-Armament, the theory of inspired democracy which, Mr. Paul Hoffman says, is the ideological counterpart of the Marshall Plan. During their stay, they live in Dr. Frank Buchman's three luxury hotels, for, as is well known, it is impossible to be morally rearmed in anything else; and, if you wonder a little at the lavishness of everything, Frank will explain that, by providing a material perfection, he sets your minds free to dwell on spiritual things.

In the great assembly room at Mountain House, you may see people of every race, class and creed. That little women over there is Princess Alice von Hohenzollern, as no time is lost in letting you know. These are two repentant Communists from the Ruhr, Max and Paul: they are full of praise for a kind gentleman called Kost, the General Direktor of the Ruhr Coal Board, who is paying their wages and expenses while they are here.

Shake hands with the daughter of the Duke of Montrose! There goes Princess Lieven: and there, Comrade Jones of the Rhondda valley. The small dark person, whose face wears such a look of simple piety, is Mr. Mitsui, of the

Mitsui Zaibatsu, before the war a giant money clique in Japan. There is a Swedish admiral; a German chief of police; an American diplomat; and a little bevy of British generals (retired). Mom is present in force; and there is a bunch of those shrewd, hard-headed industrialists and businessmen who always seem to fall for everything. Catholic priests are quietly making notes, and Lutheran pastors are loudly making speeches. And Germans, Germans, everywhere, nattering in corners, wailing, criticising, protesting. Only at meal times, when they rush to the cafeteria and munch away for dear life, does a relative silence fall.

Everything up here is a little larger than life. Smiles are wider and toothier and handshakes positively cripple. The success of M.R.A., as described, is so brilliant that one cannot understand why the world is still in such a mess. The people attending the conference, too, are apt to be presented as rather more important than they are; from hearing the officials talk, you would suppose that this was the cream and the flower of Europe.

I drew the attention of the Press Officer to what looked like over-optimism in some of his handouts, and taxed him with having on one occasion, told me a plain fib. He hung his head.

"I'm not Absolutely Honest yet," he groaned. "Sorry!"

A remark of this kind immediately makes one a friend for life; but it would be helpful if M.R.A. prefaced its publicity material with a note to say that, as the editors are still in the process of Change, the contents should be taken with a grain of salt.

Meetings are held morning and afternoon, when two or three speakers each make a statement. Every speech is doubled in German from the platform, and other languages are relayed through earphones, by courtesy of International Business Machines, Inc. In between the statements a chorus of youths and maidens, wearing a specially designed fancy dress of folksy cut, their faces stretched in a beaming smile, sing catchy numbers like "The Good Road" and "Deutschland, unser Vaterland."

There are some very fine people among the speakers. A French woman Socialist, for example, whose son was tortured before her eyes by the Germans, tells how M.R.A. helped her to overcome hatred: she is a little grey, motherly body and, as she speaks, quietly and without emotion, a great silence comes over the room. Less spiritually advanced, but engaging, is the Member for West Ham, who organised a strike at the Savoy Hotel and lay down in front of a lorry: pink, round, dimpled, very *bébé* and deliciously coy, he tells us how hard it will be for him, on his return to London, to go and say "Sorry" to the Savoy Manager.

There are the usual exhibitionists, and the ex-Indian Army officers who are tired of mowing suburban lawns, and the cosy married couples ("I never feel quite so much in love with Agnes as when we've had a good fight to bring the truth to someone"). Each is warmly applauded, but what we like best is a man who has left the Communist Party. Then we rise to our feet with one accord and give him a real ovation.

Get God the Buchman way, and fix Communism, settle industrial disputes, step up production and go down big with the family! It is curious that thousands of people who have been deaf to the voices of the saints and seers and martyrs all their lives, should now be stirred to their depths by a few peppy slogans; but it is so.

In this classless society (see prospectus) there are two places to eat: the cafeteria, seating a thousand, and the dining-room, seating two hundred. The food in the cafeteria is excellent, but it is in the dining-room that you get the Meringues Chantilly. Here, too, is Frank's Table, where, surrounded by all the nobs, sits Frank himself, grinning affably like a big-hearted fish.

To get the real flavour of the thing, however, you must go and work a shift with the angels in Frank's kitchen. Girls, what you say we make a fig *soufflé* just for Frank's Table? Pass me that tin, labelled For Frank Only. See that cherry jam? Made specially for Frank, by the King of Siam's mother. Hurry up with the fried chicken, Frank's Table has finished soup! More cream for Frank's Table! Butter for Frank's Table! Pudding for Frank's Table! This is none of Frank's doing: it's just how these devoted ladies show their gratitude for being allowed to work for him.

(Memo: Shall I tell Frank I stole a spoonful of his private Siamese cherry jam?)

Forty years have passed since Frank said "Sorry" to God for having been a materialist; and to-day, lying in the sun on a *chaise longue* and gazing dreamily at the snowy peaks of the Dent du Midi across the lake, my room filled with flowers, a bowl of grapes, peaches and pears at my elbow, I am sorely tempted to follow his example.

HONOR TRACEY

SO THEY SAY . . .

EVEN *The Times* can contradict itself. Like Homer, the punctilious Old Lady of Printing House Square is capable of nodding.

The Times, September 28:

Parliamentary sketch: [Mr. Churchill] was careful not to impugn the Minister's honesty . . .

Editorial: Mr. Churchill roamed, in his own fashion, from the atom bomb to some unworthy words about Sir Stafford Cripps's political honesty . . .

That's Different, Naturally.

Sunday Express, October 9:

P. 1—

SPEECH THAT WILL SHAKE UP BRITAIN

Mr. G. C. Chelioti, a prominent British industrialist, [told Americans] that sentimental deification of the common man, and mere morbid self-pity, are chiefly responsible for Britain's post-war lag in recovery . . . "it is not true that [British workers] worked magnificently [during the war] . . . the idea just spontaneously got about that our citizenry was behaving rather splendidly . . ."

P. 4—

WHAT MAKES A MAN SPIT AT HIS COUNTRY?

When the Miners' International Conference opened in Amsterdam last week with the playing of "God Save The King," the Scottish delegation, headed by Mr. Abe Moffat, their Communist president, ostentatiously remained seated . . .

The Unheeded Voice.

Lord Beaverbrook's personal manifesto, issued last Sunday, calling for a national minimum weekly wage of £6 a week, "is expected," commented the *Daily Mail* on Monday, "to create some confusion at the Conservative Party Conference . . . because of [Beaverbrook's] close personal friendship with Mr. Churchill." The *Mail* may have been right, for Lord Beaverbrook's announcement, which occupied most of the front page of the *Daily Express*, was completely ignored by the other Conservative papers, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Graphic*.

A Confusing Echo.

Observer, September 25:

International agreement on atomic energy control now seemed impossible, said Professor H. S. W. Massey, vice-president of the Atomic Scientists' Association of Gt. Britain, in Sydney yesterday . . .

Manchester Guardian, September 26:

Professor H. S. W. Massey . . . said . . . that international agreement on atomic energy control now seemed possible . . .

Fleet Street Mathematics.

(1). Division.

Sunday Express, September 25:

Enough tobacco to make 1,153,000 cigarettes—1,287 tons— arrived at Liverpool yesterday in the liner Media . . .

Sunday Dispatch, September 25:

. . . 1,287 tons of Virginian, enough to make 700,000,000 cigarettes . . .

(2). Multiplication.

Daily Mirror, October 3:

It was Animals' Sunday Service at Holy Trinity Church, Hereford, yesterday, and nearly 500 were there with their owners . . .

Daily Express, October 3:

. . . three thousand people came . . . 600 of them brought their pets . . .

Daily Mail, October 3:

Five thousand people went . . . and 1,000 animals . . .

Daily Herald, October 3:

The lion was one of the few animals not included among the 2,000 pets brought for the blessing . . .

AUTOLYCUS

The Arts and Entertainment

ADRIAN RYAN AND PETER LANYON

EIGHTEEN months ago—at his last exhibition—the most valid criticism of Adrian Ryan was that he was too much influenced by Soutine or, though to a lesser extent, by Van Gogh and Utrillo. Even so, I felt at the time that these artists were slowly but certainly sinking out of sight in the rich sea of Ryan's excellent pigment. The thickly encrusted yet heaving surfaces of his paintings were very much of his own creation: here or there, like somebody's head pressing against the canvas of a tent from inside, you could feel a Soutine shape trying to break through. Yet these muffled gestures in the manner of Soutine (with his falsely dynamic, over-dramatic movement) were small defects to set against Ryan's intrinsic merit as a manipulator of oil paint—whether in thick gobbets or thin scribbled smears. In any case, the present exhibition of his paintings at the Redfern Gallery shows that even Soutine's (or Utrillo's) ghost is exorcised.

What emerges is a vision altogether sweeter in colour, calmer in mood and more lyrical in its poetry. Ryan's early ambition to emulate the gaunt, dramatic, bitter Soutine has evaporated, we now have a painter, still young, but at last all set for a slow massing of the sensuous riches of natural vision; the untroubled exploration of visual reality. The subjects of these new pictures have become, if anything, more "normal": there is no nude girl curling, for reasons of art rather than comfort, on the most painful pebbles in Cornwall; no iridescent skate, strung on a chair back, poses against a whitewashed scullery wall. Everything is very much cosier: *The Canal, Moret* or *Apples and Pears* or *Irises* or *Still Life with French Pottery* all indicate a calmer,

less Celtic preoccupation—Moret is near Paris: Sisley worked there. But it is chiefly in the present functioning of his colour that Ryan's development is registered most significantly. Where his strident, acidly powerful colour used to give—like Soutine's—too little hint of the natural spaciousness of air, land and water; where it used to cancel the atmosphere, ejecting the air from the spaces between the blue-black trees, and rendering rocks, sea or foliage equally solid, equally chunky, his colour now is increasingly an agent of light, space and spatial colour. Rather like Van Gogh's, Ryan's colour used to have the lemon-yellow gleam of disquiet about it; the prussian-blue gloom of a dream or a partial eclipse of the sun pervaded his landscape. These things have gone. Though he is still a poet of colour, his intense schemes are now employed in the service of plain daylight: the unneurotic canal or the lovely blue irises have become a sufficient motive.

Leaving the Redfern for the Lefevre, where Peter Lanyon, a native inhabitant of St. Ives, has his first London exhibition, we exchange the warm sunshine of the actual for the cold, grey-white light of an imaginary, almost a lunar, world. But this is only a way of putting it. Actually I recognised this white gleam of clear grey light which Lanyon's near-abstract painting gives off—it is the light of St. Ives, of a peninsula seven-eighths surrounded by ocean, where the sky has a soft white radiance that must come from reflection off the huge surrounding mirror of the Atlantic. You see the same grey-white light permeating the blue shadows (since it comes from every direction simultaneously) of cottages or rocks in Christopher Wood: and it also informs the immaculate greys of Ben Nicholson's abstractions. This Cornish phenomenon, this excess of white light, wonderfully enhances the very pale cement-washed cottage roofs of Cornwall, and, of course, the granite with its pale lichens: dark green bushes or grass are darker and greener because of it.

Lanyon has been influenced by Gabo, Adrian Stokes, Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth and Alfred Wallis: also, he seems to have paid attention to the drawing of Leonardo. One cannot pretend that he has fought his way out of all this as yet: but what one can say is that if he were not such a dogged "original"—and despite the above list, Lanyon is most original—he would have found some compromise before now which would have permitted him a degree of fluency which, at present, he sometimes lacks. It is possible that these pale and streamlined images (beautifully painted: he is a very good craftsman) based in part on a subjective feeling for the bones of Cornwall—the form of its rocks, the contours of its hills—and in part on a more visual awareness of things, would gain in coherence if Lanyon concentrated less on structure and movement and more upon the actual *appearance* of solid objects—upon the play of light over surfaces. The subjective Gabo has left too deep a mark: Lanyon searches too often and too hard for the abstract archetype of the form of a hill or a rock; I can't help feeling his paintings would crystallise harder and clearer if he were more often content to record the visual impact itself, the mere sensation, the mere appearance of his subject. As it is, a painting by him plays a sort of hide-and-seek with visual reality. We recognise a headland, round and smooth at the top, sharper and more angular below with the long horizon of the sea behind; and then the sweep of land towards a cove and another headland; the whole thing fascinatingly constructed in a horizontal panel fifty inches by eleven. It is a beautiful composition of interweaving, taut, slim, sculptured forms (number 60, *West Penwith*). But instead of keeping up the conviction of an external landscape, Lanyon seems to allow his images to dissolve here and there into something quite different—into an analogy of bone overlapped by tendons, perhaps. In itself there is nothing wrong in that: I am all for as many *formal* analogies being crowded in as are compatible with a fluent, clear design. What I feel about Lanyon is that he is not always clear himself about these shifting analogies: the transition from wall-patterned fields streaked with outcrops of rock to muscle and bone (or whatever) is sometimes indeterminate. And this causes hesitations in the purely formal movement of the design—inconsistencies in the structure which result, in fact, in a slightly monotonous repetition of certain rhythms. Excessive subjectivity in painting is always characterised by a tendency to formal repetition and monotony. If Peter Lanyon can cultivate sensation as well as imagination he may give us something of exceptional interest; he has none of the modern French clichés—only a few outworn elliptical motifs from Gabo here and there.

PATRICK HERON

CHILDREN'S CONCERTS

THIS is the 21st season of the Robert Mayer Concerts for Children at the Central Hall, Westminster. They began there in 1922, and have continued without a break except for the war years; on their resumption, Boyd Neel took over the duties of Sir Malcolm Sargent, to whom he has proved a worthy successor, both as conductor and as children's guide, expositor and friend.

It was not easy, a quarter of a century ago, to convince people that children either wanted or deserved such concerts as these. Now we take them for granted; so popular have they grown that since the war a second series has been launched by Ernest Read (also on Saturday mornings at the Central Hall), and the two titles, so far from damaging one another's prospects, are both sold out. Lately, at Coram's Fields (the Foundling Hospital with which Handel was closely associated) a third and quite different series has begun to struggle into existence; unlike the others, which are purely orchestral, the Coram's Fields concerts (the next two are on November 12th and December 10th) are devoted to chamber music and songs, performed by advanced students of the Royal Academy of Music; admission costs the engaging sum of one penny. So much for London; in the provinces too the idea has caught on, and everywhere the attitude of educational authorities towards music has been transformed, so that there are now few schools in which music does not play an active and essential part in the curriculum. Much of the credit for this change of heart belongs to the idealism and generosity of Sir Robert and Lady Mayer.

The situation in 1949 is completely different from that of 1922. Then, in a great many homes and schools, children were growing up with almost no experience of the symphonic classics; now, on the contrary, they grow up, more often than not, in a room perpetually soaked with the more or less distorted reproduction of musical masterpieces to which no one is paying any attention. This makes the problem of their education harder rather than easier. A child may now acquire a nodding acquaintance with the classics, but he is bound to conceive of music as a mere background to life, like the sound-track of the films which he sees every week; unless he is exceptionally gifted, he is most unlikely to listen with riveted attention to the sounds which come from the family loudspeaker. For the instructor it is thus no longer a question of filling a vacuum with a fascinating new substance, but of digging down, through a sludge of half-heard and undigested musical experience, to a state of potential receptivity. Moreover, the work done at these concerts or in schools is constantly undone all over again for those children who have the misfortune to come from a home where the radio drips all day like a tap. In spite of all that broadcasting has done for music, its arrival has made the Children's Concert an even more valuable institution than before.

* * *

At this time of year musical organisations flood the public and the press with their prospectuses. Among so many, there are two modest groups to which I should like to draw attention. The South Place Concerts, which take place on Sunday evenings in the Conway Hall, have been an established institution for 58 years; their programmes for this season are particularly interesting and include all six of the Bartók quartets. Last week the London Opera Club began its winter activities with two enjoyable performances of Cimarosa's *Matrimonio Segreto*. It was interesting enough, in any event, to hear a work, produced the year after Mozart's death, which was considerably more successful in its day than any of Mozart's *opere buffe* had been; what made it much more than interesting was the exceedingly witty translation by Dennis Arundell (who also produced): I never recall hearing dry recitative sound so easy, pointful and amusing. Stanford Robinson conducted a performance which had great merits, despite some weak members of the cast and unavoidably inadequate rehearsal; among the performers Owen Brannigan, Richard Lewis, Bruna Maclean and Bruce Boyce especially distinguished themselves. As for the music, it says half as much as Mozart and takes twice the time to do so (which is doubtless one reason for its contemporary popularity); but it has grace, melody, infectious high spirits, and a real theatrical sense of comic character and comic situation.

At Covent Garden, *Aïda* is an immense improvement on its first production by the present company last year. Warwick Braithwaite maintains the rhythmic impulse without loss of sensuous feeling, Franz Lechleitner makes an adequate if uninspiring Radames, and Ljuba Welitsch has enriched and subtilised her portrait of the heroine, both on the musical and dramatic sides, almost out of recognition. If not a great performance, this is a performance with many great moments.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

RADIO NOTES

I FOUND the two most enjoyable of the week's programmes both in the Third; and both were of poets reading their own work and commenting on it as they went along. Mr. Dylan Thomas, as we all know, reads poetry in the grand manner, and his delivery and his noble voice constitute in themselves a pretty searching test of the material read: they can make the thin, the slipshod, the pretentious, sound silly. Mr. Thomas's poems emerged quite triumphantly. He said in passing that for a poet to read his own work in public "was to let the cat out of the bag"; as it seems to me, the value of listening to a poet reading his work is that it lets the reader to some extent into the poet's mind. What was striking, in the case of Mr. Thomas, was not so much the added beauty the voice gave to such superb lines as "And sculptured Ann is seventy years of stone" as the illumination it threw upon poems which one had always found moving without wholly understanding; for even so formal and full-throated a delivery as Mr. Thomas's is in effect a thinking of the poem aloud, and, listening, one is allowed to follow the workings of the poet's mind.

No greater contrast to Mr. Thomas's method of reading could be imagined than Mr. Betjeman's, in the programme recorded in the British Council's lecture-room at Stratford, though it was no less effective. As entertainment it was first-class. No question here of the poet's letting the cat out of the bag. How artful was the poet's artlessness, his nonchalance, frankness, his air of giving-the-game-away. It was—and I use the word advisedly—a marvellous act. I had the feeling that you could have put Mr. Betjeman down in *Music Hall* and he'd still have got away with it. Mr. Betjeman, it seems, is commonly taken for a satirist and is indignant when he is. The misunderstanding is easy enough to make, *when the poems are read to oneself*: when heard read by the poet, it is plain that the usual distinctions made between the topographical, amatory and religious verse of Mr. Betjeman do not really hold, that the fine *Before the Anaesthetic*, for instance, though more complex in mood, springs from the same kind of

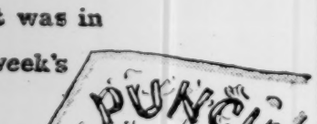
associations as *Upper Lambourne* or *Indoor Games Near Newbury*. Nor, as the unifying, levelling voice of Mr. Betjeman made plain, can the poems be divided into light and serious. Mr. Betjeman is always light, and he is always serious, and he is always both at one and the same time, irrespective of his subject.

Nothing else stimulated me as these programmes did. I must admit to finding the first programme in Mr. John Gough's new trial series, *Justice in Other Lands*, dull, even though its subject was the Landru case. Production and acting were alike admirable, and the programme contained many good things; but, after listening to most of Mr. Gough's other trial programmes, I cannot help concluding that one trial is very much like another no matter where the court may be sitting; and I felt that the *Landru Case* would have gained immeasurably by being cut by a third.

The regular weekly series have returned with the autumn, and *The Critics*, at least, has begun very well indeed; though I was a little surprised the other day to hear Mr. Basil Wright use the word "highbrow" as a reproach and Mr. Muggeridge react to it as such. Mr. Basil Taylor, a newcomer to this programme, has been excellent. Of *We Beg to Differ* I'm not so sure. So far it has proved good entertainment, which is perhaps only what one should expect of a show that contains Miss Joyce Grenfell as well as Miss Kay Hammond and the Radio Doctor. Yet I can't help suspecting the basis of the programme; discussion of subjects "upon which the sexes may disagree." Are the subjects upon which the sexes may disagree likely to be other than pretty trivial subjects? Isn't there a danger that the *objets trouvés* the speakers will turn up may prove to be merely the oldest jokes in the world? Isn't there a risk that the whole thing will degenerate into a sexual slanging match? It's only fair to say it hasn't quite done so yet; but I shall be sorry if *We Beg to Differ* means that *The Brains Trust* has been displaced.

The B.B.C. is to be congratulated on having at last done what it should have done fifteen years ago: making one of the current Schools Broadcasts series, in this instance *The History of Science*, available to adult listeners in an evening programme.

WILLIAM SALTER

I heard it from a Debutante,
Who heard it from a Debtor,
Who heard it from a Butler
Who was cutting bread-and-butter,
Who caught it from a Conjuror
Who popped it in his patter,
Who said it was in
this week's


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THE MOVIES

"Madame Bovary," at the Empire

"The Red Pony," at the Plaza

"Under Capricorn," at Warners

What disasters may occur when a gifted but superficial director attempts a subject far beyond his grasp, the new American film of *Madame Bovary* illustrates. Vincente Minnelli, whose decorative talent has shown to advantage in some musical films (notably *Meet Me in St. Louis*) now achieves a wholly meretricious version of Flaubert. The film is doomed from the start by its script, for Robert Ardrey has so compromised the figure of Emma that she is never believable either as Flaubert's heroine or even as a consistently vulgar derivative. The framework—the prosecution and acquittal of Flaubert (James Mason with a sad moustache), who introduces and rounds off his story—prepares us for the worst: Emma Bovary was simply, he tells us, the "victim" of her society. Life around her was so beastly that she could not be expected to put up with it—to point this, we are shown that she even had a nasty time at her wedding with Charles, for some rough Norman peasants brawled drunkenly and Charles had to carry his bride away seriously upset.

By this time, of course, the original conflict has been lost: Emma as the inevitable product of her society, deadlocked with it, filled with romantic daydreams and hopelessly trying to find something in that society which corresponded to them. It is typical of the adaptation that Rodolphe appears, not as the seasoned seducer who deserts her at the threat of compromise, but as a Byronic gallant in his mid-twenties unable to accept her "consuming" love. Society turns out to exist, in fact, precisely on the level of Emma's naive imagination. The film's elegant formal surface reduces passions to postures; one feels chiefly that this too poised, over-dressed Emma is a worldly provincial who simply cannot live within her income.

The players have little to do. Jennifer Jones, very much of this day and age, looks extremely beautiful but never suggests the nervous, febrile energy of Emma, nor her innate stupidity. Van Heflin as Charles, and Christopher Kent (formerly Alf Kjellin of *Frenzy*) as Leon, are not permitted to create more than wooden figures: Louis Jourdan, though too young and refined for Rodolphe, is the only actor who seems in the period and approaches an authentic style.

Two over-spent rather than mis-spent talents can be observed working hard in Technicolor this week. Lewis Milestone has directed John Steinbeck's adaptation of his own story, *The Red Pony*: a well-written script which the author rather unscrupulously throws away with a cheap happy ending. On a Californian ranch a young boy lives with parents who have reached a kind of working estrangement; his chief companion is the hired man, and his great love, a pony. The child's bitterness and disillusion with his world when the pony dies gives a twist to all relationships at the ranch. Milestone evidently wanted to make a good film, and though his craftsmanship has not failed him, he seems unable to give the various emotional tensions any depth or sharpness. The film remains neat and flat, its best feature being Aaron Copland's fresh, attractive musical score.

Alfred Hitchcock's *Under Capricorn* gives evidence of a more colossal brand of decay. This massive novelette (adapted, surprisingly, by James Bridie) tells of a dipsomaniac Irish aristocrat (Ingrid Bergman) and her rich, surly husband (Joseph Cotten) living unhappily in a mansion in Sydney during the 1830's: murder and a sinister housekeeper in the background, a dreadfully protracted love-triangle in the foreground. Hitchcock treats it all with ponderous emphasis, apparently obsessed by long-winded camera movements that culminate in swelling close-ups, and never, it seems, giving a thought to life.

GAVIN LAMBERT

Masters of British Water-colour, at Burlington House. Drawings by Francis Towne, at Agnew's

A private collection of English watercolours and drawings, rivalling in scope, if not always in quality, the collections at the Victoria and Albert and the Fitzwilliam, is at present on view at the Royal Academy. Over the last twenty years Mr. J. Leslie Wright has collected at his house in Warwickshire nearly four hundred examples, from the seventeenth-century Francis Barlow and Harry Peacham down to William Callow and Birket Foster. (What a relief it would be to see a collection of watercolours that did not peter out in Birket Foster's messy spots of colour.) The emphasis is on landscape and incident; there is nothing by Blake, Fuseli, or Calvert. The finest display is of Rowlandson; the thirty-eight examples include, as well as the expected inn scenes and village gossips, several drawings to show Rowlandson's mastery of the open, flowing design—especially *Scots Greys on the March* (23), with a line of soldiers serpentining over hilly country right out of the picture. Other artists well represented are J. R. Cozens; Girtin, recording the cathedrals and ruins of the north; John Varley, suffusing Welsh hills with poetry and light; and Turner, ranging from the modest grey-wash *Windermere* (218) and *Estuary scene* (219) to the full scale of colour of *Lancaster Sands* (223) and *Mont Cenis, Snowstorm* (227). With seven large watercolours William Pars stands out as a more impressive artist than odd works encountered in galleries would suggest; but Paul Sandby becomes duller when seen in bulk. There are four works by Francis Towne in the Wright collection; but round the corner at Agnew's, Towne can be seen at his best in the loan exhibition of his drawings from Mr. Oppé's collection. These show the development of a competent but unexciting topographical draughtsman to a master of mountain form. After years spent on the parks and mansions of the Devonshire gentry, Towne went to the mountains of Wales and Cumberland and the Alps and set down in firm washes of grey, brown and steely blue the massive mountain forms that underlie the superficial accidents of weather, atmosphere and vegetation. It is most interesting to compare J. R. Cozens's treatment of mountains in *Between Chamouny and Martigny* (115 at Burlington House) with Towne's *Lake of Como* (20 at Agnew's).

The Art of the Bookjacket, at the Victoria and Albert Museum

It was not until the beginning of the Thirties that publishers began to realise that book jackets could be something more than a piece of wrapping paper displaying any crudely arranged type that the "jobbing" printer happened to have available. Probably this was due to the influence of a few men of taste and originality on the whole visual side of printing and publicity. A firm like Faber and Faber, by employing Mr. Barnett Freedman, Rex Whistler and Mr. McKnight Kauffer made the English bookjacket the best in the world. And the present exhibition shows that we still have this minor supremacy in the art world. If Faber jackets have now settled down to a certain formula, the younger houses of John Lehmann and Hamish Hamilton are continuing the tradition by commissioning jackets from those front-rank artists who are willing to learn a new technique. The exhibition shows how well the plain typographical jacket may stand up to the "picture" jacket, when the type is chosen and arranged with the unfailing taste of Mr. Oliver Simon, of Curwen Press, whose work in this field makes him a direct descendant of the Renaissance typographers. The organisers of the exhibition evidently do not have over-much sympathy for those arrangements of type of a Germanic inelegance which Mr. Stanley Morrison produced for Gollancz. Although their vulgarity was obvious, their design was masterly and their purpose completely achieved.

Correspondence

PALESTINE POLICE

SIR,—In "London Diary" in your issue of the 1st of October you saw fit to quote passages from Arthur Koestler's *Promise and Fulfilment* which alleged that the Palestine Police Force was one of the most disreputable organisations in the British Commonwealth. The intention of your comment was obviously to cause public suspicion of the integrity of the Metropolitan Police by questions designed to suggest to your readers that stations in the East End have been manned by design with large numbers of ex-members of the Palestine Police.

A reference to Hansard of July 7th would have shown that the Home Secretary gave the answers to these quite recently. The total number of British ex-Palestine police officers is about 4,000, of whom 168 are now serving in the Metropolitan Police area and of these 27 only, surely not an undue proportion, are serving in stations covering the boroughs of Stepney, Hackney, Stoke Newington and Bethnal Green.

I must protest against the wholesale vilification of a force, openly recruited from our fellow countrymen, under discipline of a military character and sent to work in circumstances which would have tried the nerves of the most experienced veteran corps. With the strictures of your journal on the policy of H.M.G. in Palestine I have been in hearty agreement and would not seek to minimise or condone the errors of judgment at home nor the folly of the military advice which led to them.

The recruitment of the Palestine Police, however, was most carefully conducted; and from former pupils of my own, for whose character I was called upon to vouch, I learned something of the high standard demanded and the strict instructions as to impartiality given on acceptance. Young constituents of mine who served in the Force visited me on its disbandment and convinced me that only a negligible minority failed to measure up to their own high standards. Unprejudiced observers, including some of my Jewish friends, have borne witness to the great restraint and discipline shown by the vast majority of the men. Zionists have been the first to deplore to me the tone of your comments which they feel will serve only to revive past bitterness which we all hope has ceased to hamper Anglo-Israeli relations.

House of Commons. FREDERICK W. SKINNARD

[We made no general aspersions on the integrity of the Metropolitan Police. We did ask how many ex-members of the Palestine Police were serving in the East End and we cannot agree with Mr. Skinnard that twenty-seven Palestine policemen in predominantly Jewish areas can be described as only a "fair proportion." To draft any of these men to this area seems to be asking for trouble. We know well that many of the British police in Palestine behaved excellently in conditions of great provocation. It may be the best were Mr. Skinnard's ex-pupils. That the majority came back in a state of mind that made them unfit for service in a Jewish area in this country no one who is acquainted with the facts will doubt.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE COMINFORM AND TITO

SIR,—Please allow me, as a Communist, to express my disgust at the cynical casuistry employed by Prof. Bernal in his endeavours to justify Soviet aggression against Yugoslavia, a small country endeavouring to build Socialism in independence. His statement that "Tito is quite openly in the pay of American Bankers" is arrant nonsense, to support which not one single Cominform mouthpiece has ever offered any serious proof. It is swallowed only by those whose blind faith makes them accept everything from Moscow as beyond question, and regard anyone who disagrees with Moscow as automatically a Fascist beast, an imperialist agent, a Trotskyist, a bourgeois, or whatever insult happens to be fashionable with *Pravda* at the time.

His statement that Yugoslavia "offers promising possibilities as a military base" is a masterpiece of slickness; any country can be a military base, but again, has any evidence been adduced to show that Yugoslavia would allow itself to become a military base for the imperialists? If the implication of Prof. Bernal's remarks is not that the U.S.S.R. has the right to commit aggression against any country which might conceivably become a military base, and against which the leaders of the Cominform wish to raise fantastic and unsubstantiated charges, I should like to know what it really is. I have always condemned the American aggression, interference, and base-grabbing, and their excuses were exactly the same as the Professor's.

What has happened to the Professor, who began political life with the noblest of intentions, as the result of blindly accepting Soviet pragmatism (a complete departure from Marxist philosophy, which is humanistic) is shown by his sneers at those who showed "concern for the Sudetendeutsch in 1938." All real progressives showed as much concern for the Sudetendeutsch as for anyone else, but it did not stop them defending Czechoslovakia against Hitler and Chamberlain. It was precisely Hitler, Runciman, and Halifax who posed the question as one of either concern for the Sudetendeutsch or concern for Czechoslovakia. A true Communist shows concern for the welfare of all peoples, not only for that of the Russians.

As for what the Soviet Notes brought home to the Yugoslav people, during my two visits to Yugoslavia this summer I took care to look up old Yugoslav comrades, from the International Brigades in Spain, from Partisan days, from the Youth Rally in 1947, and those who had been here on diplomatic duty at one time or another. They all condemned the Soviet attempt to exploit and dominate their country; the Yugoslav Communist party and the vast majority of the people are enthusiastically for Tito, and the Soviet Note, which was published in full in Belgrade, has served only to confirm them in their views and their determination to see this thing through.

Soviet aggression against Yugoslavia and rubber-stamping by people like Bernal do more than anything else to weaken the peace campaign, and to play into the hands of American and British warmongers. To say that everything the Soviet Union does must be right, and that any criticism of them is either Fascist, or (when one wishes to be very condescending and conciliatory) irrelevant, is effectively to discredit oneself in the eyes of decent British people, be they workers or intellectuals, and to render them less ready to accept just denunciations of American warmongering.

A. V. SHERMAN

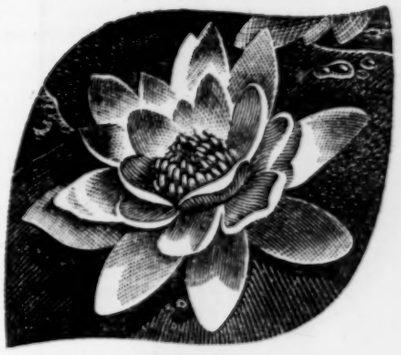
POLAND AND GERMANY

SIR,—Both Critic and his Unesco friend from Eastern Europe must have a curious sense of logic if it appears to them that "Soviet policy about Germany seems logically to imply another partition of Poland." The German People's Council, which is the principal German protagonist for a unified Germany, has been most specific that it wants Germany to be unified within its present boundaries. The German Economic Commission, which is its economic counterpart, is basing its plans and its programme on the assumption that those boundaries are permanent. The East German Government, presumably with Soviet approval, has been most explicit in its declaration to the same effect, while the West German Government has been roundly denounced by the Soviet Union for its revisionist aspirations. EDGAR P. YOUNG

GUSTAV GRUENDGENS

SIR,—In your issue of September 24, Critic doubts "whether it was really wise to heap honours on this particular German, Gustav Gruendgens, at the Edinburgh Festival." Critic bases his doubts on Herr Gruendgens' activities under the Nazi regime and concludes his account by saying: "In 1945, he stayed in Berlin and worked very amicably for the Russians. When attention was called to his past, he moved to the British Zone and became one of the outstanding champions of Western Christendom."

In dealing with Herr Gruendgens' post-war record, Critic seems to have been misinformed. Herr Gruendgens came before a Four-Power denazification tribunal in April, 1946. This tribunal knew as much



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as Critic does about Herr Gruendgens' activities during the Nazi period. It also knew of other activities of his which enabled it to clear him from all of the restrictions to which those who did not pass its scrutiny were condemned. It is worth noting that the standard set by this Four-Power tribunal in Berlin was such a strict one that it was from the beginning the practice of panels in the Western Zones to accept a satisfactory verdict from it as clearing anyone from disabilities, if he left Berlin and came to the West.

Herr Gruendgens was subsequently invited by the authorities of the Soviet Sector of Berlin to be the Director of the Deutsches Theater in that Sector. He decided to refuse this invitation and then moved to the British Zone. It is quite wrong to say that he only left when attention was called to his past. That had been done very effectively when he was cleared by the tribunal.

I am not aware that the Edinburgh Festival Committee invited Herr Gruendgens as "the representative of Goethe's Germany." Perhaps, however, this phrase is only a piece of playful rhetoric, as is presumably the suggestion that honours were heaped on him. I understand that the Committee decided rather that it would be desirable to include a performance of *Faust* in the year of the second centenary of Goethe's birth and invited the Duesseldorf Theatre Company, because its production of the play was known to be outstanding. But the innuendo in Critic's reference to Herr Gruendgens' career since the end of the war is serious and it would seem right that the facts should be stated.

R. BIRLEY

Eton College, Windsor, Berks.

[Critic writes: The Provost of Eton does not dispute the facts I mentioned about Mr. Gruendgens' long and prosperous career as 'star' of the Hitler regime. But I am grateful to him for calling my attention to the remarkable fact that, despite this record, he was denazified quadrilaterally in Berlin, before he moved to Western Germany. The decision of the Court made it possible for him to continue his career on the stage in Germany; but it does not remove my doubts whether it was wise to select this particular actor for the honour of playing the leading role in the Edinburgh production of *Faust*, which celebrated the Goethe Centenary."—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

SIR,—Oswald Garrison Villard was, as Critic says, the finest surviving example of an old-fashioned American liberal; and ironically, that lonely eminence during the latter half of his life gave him a national standing such as no other editor of his time attained. He was the best-known political journalist in the United States. There was a large audience for him whenever his name was announced. He was not a ready speaker, and he made a practice of writing his addresses, yet he never failed to command attention.

This he could not have done as owner-editor of the *Nation* alone, important and challenging though his paper was. It was Villard the crusader who counted. He was completely devoted to his causes (including, most particularly, the welfare of the Negro) and, needless to say, his financial independence added force to both voice and pen. He was always on the unpopular side: not on account of perversity or of any wish to be in the smallest minority, but essentially, I believe, because all his roots and loyalties were in that old America which, throughout his fifty fighting years, as he called them, was in process of manifold dissolution.

Villard was editor, leader-writer, and special correspondent. Despite the vigour, and rigour, of his opinions, he was a master of the difficult craft of objective reporting. English readers had a notable specimen of this talent in 1939. Being here as the war began he was encouraged by the authorities to visit Germany. The result was a series of articles in the *Daily Telegraph* (re-issued in book form as *Inside Germany*) which earned high praise, first for the picture of Nazi Germany after the crushing of Poland, and secondly for Villard's tribute to the British people as they faced the ordeal.

He had large reserves of political knowledge and, accompanying and reinforcing his pacifism, a surprising acquaintance with the U.S. War Department and American military history. He wrote a biography of John Brown of Harper's Ferry, a work of massive research, and two valuable books on the American newspaper press, together with one of the best of recent autobiographies.

Villard was extraordinarily resolute, consistent, and courageous. During a long period he was subjected to wild and venomous abuse. It did not deflect him from his course; he was never soured. Many of us have felt that an especially fine trait in his character was the gift of holding his hard views on national and world affairs entirely apart from his personal relations. I know very few American public men whose friends are more in number than those who enriched the life of Oswald Villard. In friendship he was generous, understanding, steadfast.

Princes Risborough. S. K. RATCLIFFE

PERON'S ARGENTINA

SIR,—I wish to direct the attention of your readers to the tragedy of the Argentine scene. As a student of engineering in one of the five Government-run universities—the only ones that exist in Argentina—I have seen practically every capable, honest or politically minded professor thrown out of a job for the sole reason of having one of those qualities; in their place we have incompetent nobodies who are instruments of Peron's policy. Activities of student organisations have been reduced to a minimum by means of threats, arrests, and other Fascist methods.

The political atmosphere is even more distressing. Every means possible has been used to stamp out opposition parties. A special target is the small but very influential Argentine Socialist Party, whose leaders have been officially accused of being *vende patrias* (traitors); this, of course, after their widely circulated weekly *La Vanguardia* of more than fifty years of existence had been prohibited, because of alleged insanitary conditions in its workshop. All radio stations, cinema studios, newspapers, except *La Prensa* and *La Nacion*, which are at present under heavy fire from the Government, have been bought and are used by the huge propaganda machine for its political aims. Its main daily *Democracia* is owned and run by Mme Peron.

The result of all Peron's policy is, as far as I can see, this: in general the workmen are better off materially than before the regime, providing they are, or pretend to be, *peronistas*, but in five years Peron has made the country go back at least fifty in education, culture and the political capacity of its working class, who are now highly nationalistic.

ARGENTINE SOCIALIST

W. E. HENLEY

SIR,—Mr. Graham Greene, reviewing Connell's life of W. E. Henley in your issue of October 8, is fully within his rights in disliking Henley, and in deploring Mr. John Connell's technique as a biographer. We, however, as publishers of the book want to know why we are described as "respectable" (the word being printed in quotation marks is manifestly a sneer). The sentence as written is capable of a highly offensive interpretation and we feel that we are justified in asking for a clear statement of its meaning.

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[A careful reading of Mr. Greene's review makes it quite clear that, in using the word "respectable," he referred back to his first paragraph in which he queried Mr. Connell's use of the adjective in the phrase "respectable anthologies." Neither Mr. Greene nor we intended to cast any sort of slight on the status of Messrs. Constable.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE TOMB OF OSCAR WILDE

SIR,—A few days ago, with a group of friends, I went to the cemetery of Père Lachaise, to look again at Epstein's fine monument to Oscar Wilde. We found that the lettering of the inscription on the back of the stone, concluding with the moving lines from "Reading Gaol," was so weather-worn as to be, in places, barely legible.

May I suggest that there must be scores of admirers of the many recent revivals of Wilde's plays who would be glad—as I should—to contribute towards the small amount which would be needed for re-cutting the inscription, if someone with the necessary contacts in Paris would give the lead.

J. F. HORRABIN

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE familiar portraits of Tennyson, noble, wilful, a little ravaged, a great deal like his own Ulysses, have this in common with the equally familiar *Life* by the poet's son Hallam (which suggests that he had in him quite as much of Telemachus)—they stir but do not satisfy our curiosity. Sir Charles Tennyson, the poet's grandson, has now recast the official biography;* the anxious piety of that invaluable work is replaced by an urbane critical sympathy; the baffling omissions are supplied. It is an excellent book.

The poet's father, dispossessed from boyhood in favour of his younger brother Charles, had been directed into the Church, where he settled down "reluctantly and defiantly" at Somersby, a powerful, restless man, brooding over his wrongs, and putting much sombre energy into educating his older children. There were eleven eventually, tall and gipsy like, given to reading, scribbling and play acting, ignorant of social behaviour and the outside world. Alfred was the third in age.

So much we know. What Hallam Tennyson did not record was the dark side of this domestic picture. The Rector, chafed by his brother's success and his own frustration took to drinking heavily, had strange "seizures", and terrified his family by fits of violence. The gentle mother's evangelical piety did not lighten the atmosphere. Edward turned out to be mentally unbalanced; Charles, as a young man, became an opium addict. Frederick, the eldest, whose sinister manner at Cambridge was said to terrify elderly dons, was described as being "very *distrait*, and more like an inhabitant of Laputa than of England." The very servants might have come out of Wuthering Heights—the raging cook; the rebuked coachman who threw the harness on the floor—"Clean it yourself, then."

But presently, Alfred, with two of his brothers, is at Cambridge; Hallam, the universal favourite, is his friend, praises his poetry, becomes engaged to his sister. Hallam's brilliance is a matter of report, but we cannot doubt his charm and vitality and his great gift for making other people feel brilliant. The few of his poems that Sir Charles prints have a graceful wildness recalling Moore or even Shelley. We read of Alfred, in his new self confidence, giving imitations of George IV, or of Satan in the guise of a toad; declaiming old ballads or his own poems in the rooms of cronies, accompanying a few friends to Spain on a disastrous revolutionary expedition. But his new volume of Poems receives a scarifying review in the *Quarterly*, and while he is still suffering from its effect, he hears that Hallam has died suddenly, in Vienna.

In Memoriam, published seventeen years later, was not the only monument to his friend. Until half his life was over, all Tennyson's poems dealing with love and death sprang, like the classical hyacinth, out of this loss. Yet the next few years, so inaccurately described as silent, are not wholly gloomy (they resulted in the magnificent 1842 volume). Some of the pictures are quite gay—Alfred skating at Epping, for instance, with his long blue cloak blowing out behind him, though he was appalled by his first sight of London, as he imagined all the seething crowds lying "horizontal, stark and stiff in their coffins." Yet the fear soon passed, and he seems to have spent much time in a kind of harmless bohemianism, passing long masculine evenings with Milnes, Thackeray, Forster, Landor, Macready, Fitzgerald and the rest. His judgments were much respected. He made no attempt to do any other work than writing poetry; indeed, at no time did he ever, apparently, do anything he did not wish. All the same, his severe hypochondria about this period is not without interest. He had one real trouble, the loss of all his money in a project for turning out wood carvings by machinery. But the poet's reputation had so much grown that, when still a bachelor in his thirties, he was awarded a Civil List pension. 1850 saw the three remaining major events of his life. His lingering engagement to Emily Sellwood, begun a dozen years ago, was resolved into marriage. She was nearly forty, he was a few years older; they were very happy. He published *In Memoriam*. He was appointed Poet Laureate. His uncle Charles who, it is pleasing to know, found all this very distasteful chose to have printed a long verse elegy called *Eustace*. It did not receive much attention.

The rest of the story—nearly half a century of it—holds no secrets. The great man may be allowed his crotchets; they are all part of the legend—the growling pronouncements, the readings and the interjections ("Stately and tender, isn't it?"), the racy stories, the favourite dish of pigs' trotters. Wuthering Heights has at last given place to Audley Court, decorated to the poet's taste with "red and flesh coloured wallpapers and gold frames." Instead of the crowded Rectory, incubating in its dark warmth not only Alfred's genius but Alfred's fear and doubts, and Edward's insanity, and the melancholy of Septimus, and Matilda's religious obsessions, here is mild, delightful Farringford, with its two little boys, very pretty and picturesque (Hawthorne noted) in unusually coloured tunics, with their hair in long ringlets. The Prince Consort calls; invitations come from the Queen. The stream of guests include Edward Lear, Jowett, Garibaldi, Queen Emma of the Sandwich Islands. The poet refuses a £20,000 offer for an American tour; accepts £1,000 from a New York paper for a three-stanza poem. Here, or in his final home at Aldworth, *Maud* is written, and the *Idylls*, and the *Northern Farmer*, and all the plays. "To-day," a typical entry runs in Emily's diary, "he made the stately Queen's Answer to Geraint. He said that the mountain opposite looked like Parnassus. He and I had long talks about the infinity of the Universe and about God." Reluctantly, he accepts a peerage, promising Mr. Gladstone that he will not wear his wideawake hat in the House of Lords. The tide of public taste seems to have stayed for him when he dies in 1892.

All this pleases the imagination, already stirred at the thought of the sheer uninterrupted business of creative invention over so long a life. But the advantage of a book of such rich material not greatly coloured by personal interpretation is that in it we may follow the paths of many speculations. It will not explain why Tennyson was, as a poet (whatever the quality was of his thinking) one of the great originals of his craft. It may explain why a critic of his careful taste (every poem in the *Golden Treasury* had to pass his judgment) had a different plane of criticism for his own work. It may provide the clue to the incidence of dreams and trances in the longer poems, to the dream-like impulse of so many of the best lyrical lines, where the preoccupation with "accuracy" gives place to incantation:

> . . . nor cares to walk
> With Death and Morning on the silver horns,
> Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
> Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice . . .

It should throw light on the less familiar invective-Tennyson. The thrust at Lytton in the *New Timon* lines

> I *thought* we knew him: What, it's you,
> The padded man—that wears the stays—

is not unrecognisable from one brought up, as its author was, on Pope and Byron. But the brilliant sarcasm of *A Character*, though a youthful poem, belongs to a later period:

> With lips depressed as he were meek
> Himself unto himself he sold:
> Upon himself himself did feed,
> Quiet, dispassionate and cold.

So does the peculiarly effective malice of a poem like *Maud*, full of cynical observations on county society, where, between lyrics, we find ourselves listening to

> The snowy-banded, dilettante,
> Delicate-handed priest intone.

But, more than this, we may hope to find the answer to the 20th-century complaint that he was not as great as his genius, that he turned his back on the wine-dark sea and kept to "the middle road of sober thought." It is the complaint of an age that is trying to restore the marriage of art and life, that had already broken in Tennyson's time. Matthew Arnold tried to resolve it, and thought, perhaps wrongly, that he had failed. William Morris thought wrongly that he had succeeded. Browning made no attempt to do anything about it, left England, and became accepted as an arbiter of contemporary spiritual values. Tennyson most magnificently reflected the apparent compromise and the real division; his own occasional uneasiness appears in such poems as *The Lotos-Eaters* and the *Palace of Art*, where he uses the word "guilt".

Still he was, above all, a poet of lyric impulse, writing best when he wrote a little unconsciously. Argument, or didactic utterance (less so the expression of doubt) weakened his poetry. It would be a fallacy to assume that an uneventful life limited his vision. Just as he always did only what he wished to do, he saw only what he wished to see. His early reading, the sheltered Somersby Rectory, the grey wind-ravaged Lincolnshire landscape, his father's violence, Hallam's friendship, Hallam's death, the thwarting power of money, the settled English scene with its great country houses, and "nature" always—these moved him to poetry. Apart from the Cock Tavern there is nothing at all in his writing of the Dickensian London he had known so well. The coal mine in *Maud*? The train in *Locksley Hall*? The balloon in the first draft of *Fair Women*? They are hardly absorbed into their context. It would be wrong to suppose that the poet did not travel; he did, and frequently. Some of these journeys are recorded in *The Daisy*, and *The Valley of the Cauteretz*, and the *Sirmio* lines; but behind these beautiful poems is the thought of Emily, of Hallam, of Catullus. Supposing he had, as Fitzgerald would have wished, gone into battle or even "ridden, shot, drunk, and played the Devil, as Byron." We may regret that the Crimean War did not have its Wilfred Owen; the evidence suggests that it would not have been Tennyson. Supposing he had applied himself to Prose and Work, as Carlyle advised. As a novelist he might have benefited. Or, that those wishes of his had been granted, to visit the West Indies and to see the earth from a balloon. I cannot think that these adventures would have affected the real Tennysonian achievement, already shaped by his temperament, his time, and a few significant accidents in early life. That we can consider these speculations on a just basis is one of the great merits of Sir Charles's book.

NAOMI LEWIS

* *Alfred Tennyson.* By Charles Tennyson. *Macmillan.* 30s.

MORE LIGHT ON MUNICH

Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939. Third Series. Volume II, 1938. Edited by E. L. WOODWARD and ROHAN BUTLER. *Stationery Office.* 21*s.*

This volume, together with its predecessor published earlier in the year, presents the record of British diplomacy in the Czech question from March to October 1938: twelve hundred documents in total to be added to our knowledge of "Munich." It is a strictly Foreign Office record, confined to the telegrams and dispatches to and from British diplomats abroad. Without knowledge from other sources it would be difficult to guess that Munich was Chamberlain's personal work, which the Foreign Office sometimes assisted, sometimes regretted, but never originated. In a tantalising footnote, Professor Woodward, the editor, writes: "Mr. Chamberlain had considered the possibility of a visit by himself to Herr Hitler as early as August 30. He had discussed the plan with one or two of his colleagues, and had mentioned it to Sir N. Henderson during the latter's visit to London." What is the evidence for this? We are not told; and at the end we still grope after Chamberlain's actions and motives as much, perhaps, as the members of the Foreign Office did at the time.

Still, though Chamberlain sometimes conducted a private diplomacy, the Foreign Office was the main executant of policy; and Professor Woodward's two volumes give us some, though not all, the truth about British policy at the time of Munich. They give us enough at any rate to arrive at this conclusion—a conclusion which was to be expected: that the humdrum explanations were on the whole right and the melodramatic explanations on the whole wrong. For instance, Munich was not part of a deep-seated plan to launch Hitler into war against the Soviet Union. This plan, so far as it existed, was conceived only after Munich. The British Government erred in ignoring the Soviet Union, not in plotting against it. They were, no doubt, much to blame; but the Russians were also much to blame for their impenetrable secrecy. If Hitler was to be stopped without war, it was essential that Russian strength should be feared by him and counted on by the Western Powers. This was impossible without knowledge; and the Russian refusal to allow this knowledge makes one suspect that they were not strong or that they had no great objection to a war.

A graver fault of the Chamberlain Government was the deliberate exclusion of the United States from the Czech question: if an American representative had sat in at Munich, Hitler would not have succeeded as he did. This is the core of the story: the British Government wished Hitler to succeed, *i.e.*, they wished him to achieve without war a settlement of the Sudeten question which would be entirely satisfactory both to the Sudetens and, more important, to himself. Their motives were not ignoble. Certainly they were anxious to avoid war, though not so anxious as, say, M. Bonnet, the French Foreign Minister, for whom this was the sole consideration. Stronger than this was the feeling that in the Sudeten question they had a weak moral case. They were the survivors of a generation which had been brought up to believe that all the troubles of Europe would be ended if frontiers were redrawn on national lines. The Congress of Vienna had sinned against the national principle (this is one of the few pieces of historical twaddle universally known); they were not going to do the same. The Sudetens were undisputably Germans; therefore they should be included in Germany and German unity thus "completed." The Czechs themselves had contributed unconsciously to this frame of mind by insisting that Czechoslovakia was a national state; they would have been wiser to argue that east-central Europe could not be reordered on purely national lines without an upheaval of millions of people, such as has since taken place.

British statesmen and diplomats were affected by another historical legend—that appeasement had worked with France in the generation after Waterloo. Most of all, they wished to give in to Germany because they could think of no alternative; as Nevile Henderson repeatedly insisted, Germany would still be the greatest European country even after defeat in war (as indeed she is). This is very different from their fearing defeat. Complacent and old-fashioned, any such disaster as the fall of France, or even of Poland, never occurred to them; it is as though they had come under the sway of Professor Namier's historical generalisation (much preached by him in the Thirties) that world-upheavals take place at the turn of each century, not in the middle of one. When Chamberlain or Halifax talked of British weakness, they meant only that they would not be able to defend Czechoslovakia, or even to restore her, by means of war; they did not see that to admit this was to abdicate as a European Power. Or rather they saw it, and tried to make the best of things by hoping that they were abdicating in favour of a Germany which would then become civilised and peaceful. This hope was indeed the only alternative to calling on Russia and America to offset German preponderance.

Thus high principles and realism, sloth and conviction, were all mixed together in the six months' campaign of British diplomacy: a campaign to compel the Czechs to put themselves at Hitler's mercy, and a campaign to compel the French to desert the Czechs. There was plausibility in every step, even in the final threat to condone a German attack on Czechoslovakia, unless the Czechs committed suicide. Yet, despite all argument, everything was wrong from beginning to end: wrong not merely in its estimate of Hitler or of the Russians or of the Czechs; wrong, because it was degrading. In the last resort, policy is a matter of feeling, not of calculation. Munich had a bad taste; and anyone of real character must have felt it so. In this sense the Bolsheviks and others were right when they accused the Western statesmen of being rotted with materialism; they had lost the sense of right and wrong. Lord Halifax had not lost this sense: hence his elaborate explanations, arguing with himself rather than with his interlocutor, and hence, too, his tendency to bolt which appears again and again in these volumes. No other Englishman comes well out of this record; though, as one would expect, Chamberlain's associates come out worse than he does. Strangely enough, there is one honest man, his judgments always right, and his moral sense acute—M. Daladier. Puzzled and reluctant, badgered by the sophistications of Bonnet on one side and by the barren cross-examination of Sir John Simon on the other, Daladier never made a reasoned convincing case: he knew only that Munich was wrong. In the deepest sense, Daladier had the real victory. The British got their way: they achieved the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia without war, as they had always intended. But, owing to Daladier's stubbornness, they had to pay a price which they had always intended to refuse: they had to guarantee rump-Czechoslovakia, and the breach of this guarantee was the undoing both of Hitler and of the men of Munich. Thus there is something to be learnt even from this record of crookedness and folly: when a policy tastes wrong, one should spit it out.

A. J. P. TAYLOR

MR. FAULKNER'S HUMANITY

Intruder in the Dust. By WILLIAM FAULKNER. *Chatto & Windus.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

No author can conceive of the difficulty of writing a romance about a country where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong, nor anything but a commonplace prosperity, as is happily the case with my dear native land.

Hawthorne need not have worried: it did not remain happily the case with his dear native land for long. He died while the Civil War was still in progress, and for the South, at any rate, the War and the Reconstruction were to provide quite as much shadow, mystery, picturesque and gloomy wrong as any literary man could reasonably demand; and if there was no antiquity in the European sense there were plenty of ruins, without which, according to Hawthorne, romance and poetry could not grow. And to-day, if we wish to find in contemporary writing the fullest reflection of the qualities Hawthorne desired in a country, where do we go to if not to the literature of the South and, in particular, to the obsessed, doom-drenched fiction of Mr. Faulkner? There have been times when one has felt that Mr. Faulkner's exceedingly romantic imagination has got the better of him, when he has seemed to be revelling in spiritual melodrama for its own sake and busy parodying himself, as in *Absalom! Absalom!* with its nimiety of lunatics. Yet it would be impossible, I think, for even the most resolute hater of Mr. Faulkner's art to say this of *Intruder in the Dust*; it is much more likely that the austerer critics will find it too full of meaning, its message too plain.

Certainly it is the most explicit of his novels since *Soldier's Pay* and, I would say, the most disciplined. The tortuous yet always carefully controlled style still makes its demands on the reader; there are still sentences four pages long, with a minimum of punctuation, and parentheses within parentheses. Yet the technical and stylistic devices are all subordinated to a thesis; the ancient wrongs—and what must be done about them—are stated quite clearly. And perhaps because of its very explicitness, it is considerably lighter in tone than most of Mr. Faulkner's work. For once he has deliberately refrained from attempting tragedy. He has written a novel which in form is a thriller—and a very good thriller, too—but this without detracting from its profundity: and he has also gone back to one of the most compelling and enduring archetypes of American fiction.

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WINGATE

Fundamental to Mr. Faulkner's vision is his conception of time. As he writes in *Intruder in the Dust*:

> It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago. For every Southern boy fourteen years old, not once but whenever he wants it, there is the instant when it's still not two o'clock on that July afternoon in 1863, the brigades are in position behind the rail fence, the guns are laid and ready in the woods and the furled flags are already loosened to break out and Pickett himself with his long oiled ringlets and his hat in one hand probably and his sword in the other looking up the hill waiting for Longstreet to give the word and it's all in the balance, it hasn't happened yet, it hasn't even begun yet, it not only hasn't begun yet but there is still time for it not to begin against that position. . . .

It is this conception of time that explains much that is eccentric (though never arbitrary) in his style; it also makes him a traditionalist: he is still fighting the Civil War, is still living in the old Southern civilisation that the War destroyed, is still repudiating in proud poverty the domination of the Yankees. No less important, it gives him a special relation to the Negro. This relation is the theme of the novel, which is, in my view, the most satisfying study of the colour problem in the South that we have yet had in fiction.

Intruder in the Dust is the story of a narrowly-averted lynching. An old Negro, Lucas Beauchamp, accused of shooting a white man, is brought to the town jail by the sheriff. His guilt is taken for granted by everyone, except by a sixteen-year-old boy Chick Mallison, who knows the old man, whose first encounter with him, indeed, four years earlier, shattered his preconceived notions of the nature of white and black; for on that occasion Lucas hadn't behaved like a Negro; instead, he had behaved like a haughty old Southern aristocrat, which in fact is how he sees himself, since he is the grandson, although coloured, of a planter of the Civil War days. It is here that Mr. Faulkner taps what is still one of the most fructifying traditions in American fiction, the tradition that springs from *Huckleberry Finn*. Chick, helped by a Negro boy and by an indomitable old spinster, secretly digs up the grave of the murdered man and finds in it the wrong corpse. It is Chick who persuades his Uncle Gavin, a lawyer, and the sheriff, that Lucas Beauchamp cannot be guilty. And it is entirely through Chick's eyes, mind and memory that we see the action. It is through Chick that we get Mr. Faulkner's comment on and interpretation of the situation of the South, for during the action Chick comes to realise the truth of his uncle's words, which throughout fulfil the function of a chorus. The truth, as Mr. Faulkner sees it, is that the South, white and coloured alike, is inextricably one family: Lucas Beauchamp is second cousin of the white landowner who is his neighbour; old Miss Habersham who helps Chick disinter the body, does so because the mother of Beauchamp's wife was her wet-nurse. The relation between white and coloured is therefore much more complex than it can be in the North; it is a family relation as well as an opposition between colours. And so we come to Mr. Faulkner's creed:

> ". . . we alone in the United States are a homogeneous people. . . . That's why we must resist the North: not just to preserve ourselves nor even the two of us as one to remain one nation because that will be the inescapable by-product of what we will preserve: which is the very thing that three generations ago we lost a bloody war in our own backyards so that it remain intact: the postulate that Sambo is a human being living in a free country and hence must be free. That's what we are really defending: the privilege of setting him free ourselves . . . . As for Lucas Beauchamp, Sambo, he's a homogeneous man too . . . . we—he and us—should confederate: swap him the rest of the economic and political and cultural privileges which are his right, for the reversion of his capacity to endure and survive. Then we would prevail; together we would dominate the United States; we would present a front not only impregnable but not even to be threatened by a mass of people who no longer have anything in common except a frantic greed for money and a basic fear of a failure of national character which they hide from one another behind a loud lipservice to a flag."

What Mr. Faulkner does in *Intruder in the Dust* is to show us a community suddenly aware of guilt in itself: "Lucas Beauchamp, once the slave of any white man within range of whose notice he happened to come, now tyrant over the whole country's white conscience." Mr. Faulkner evokes the community of Jefferson with all his old skill, which is more than skill. The sense of mobs, not waiting to lynch but waiting passively to watch a lynching, is superbly rendered. And Mr. Faulkner has the art of seeing his characters with, as it were, a double vision, in both their temporal and their enduring aspects, as in this snapshot of a Negro ploughing: "the man and the mule and the wooden plow which coupled them furious and solitary, fixed and without progress in the earth, leaning terrifically against nothing." So Chick is at once a sixteen-year-old boy of the present decade, a boy of the Confederate Army of 1862, even a British officer of the first world war. While completely retaining his individuality, he becomes an image of all who can say:

> Some things you must always be unable to bear.
> Some things you must never stop refusing to bear.
> Injustice and outrage and dishonor and shame.

Similarly with Lucas Beauchamp: out of date in fine rags, refusing to make distinctions between white and black, refusing to be beholden to anybody, he is both a most satisfying comic creation and an image of human integrity. What is striking in this novel, beyond the great gifts that we take for granted in Mr. Faulkner, is its humanity. In the past he has seemed to be gravelled by his sense of picturesque and gloomy wrongs. He is not in this new novel. In *Intruder in the Dust* he has written a book that is positively inspiriting; which is scarcely the adjective one would have applied to his work in the past.

WALTER ALLEN

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In this brief *Survey*, a little masterpiece of succinct analysis, Professor Lewis is bold enough to point unhesitatingly to a single factor as the prime cause of the troubles of the inter-war period. Observing that the contraction of international trade, accentuated by the aftermath of the 1929 slump—tariffs, currency restrictions and unemployment—was a phenomenon visible already in the relatively prosperous Twenties, he argues (convincingly, I think) that throughout the capitalist age the dynamic element had been the growing demand of industrial countries for primary products; it was this growth which kept the wheels turning by dispensing to primary producers the purchasing power to buy manufactures. The first world war, however, and its aftermath brought about a sharp decline in the cumulative annual rate of increase of population in industrialised countries, particularly in Europe. Combined with technological progress in more economical use of raw materials, this change in the "population curve" led to a persistent contraction in demand for primary products and an equally persistent depression in the prices realised by their sale. In consequence, though Britain, as an industrial country, enjoyed exceptionally favourable terms of trade during most of the inter-war period, she paid for that deceptive advantage by a record level of long-term unemployment.

If the correctness of this diagnosis be accepted, it follows that much turns on the question whether primary "over-production" is likely to be corrected by the rapid industrialisation of Eastern Europe, India and China. If it is, there should, on Mr. Lewis's premises, be greater stability in the world economy—accompanied, probably, by less international specialisation in types of production. If the terms of trade move in favour of primary producers, there should be a recovery in the volume of international trade in manufactures—at the expense, it may be, of the industrial worker's standard of life—whereas, if the present shortages of primary products prove, as in 1920, to be local and transient, cheap living in industrialised countries will be paid for once again by unemployment. Meanwhile, Mr. Lewis argues, we can only hope that international co-operation in general, and schemes for internationally controlled "buffer stocks" in particular, will succeed in maintaining a "correct" balance between world production of manufactures and that of primary products.

Such, in brief, is Mr. Lewis's diagnosis; and few would quarrel with his prescription. Yet many readers, I think, will be left with the feeling that, in this neat dissection of 1919-39, something must have been overlooked. Was it really as simple as all that? Does not the author underestimate, for instance, the importance of the growing self-sufficiency of the United States as a factor (accentuated, not diminished, to-day) in the wrecking of multilateral trade? Not everyone will share the confidence with which Mr. Lewis declares: "The U.S.A. has become a creditor country and will develop an import surplus. Her people can choose whether adjustment must fall principally on industries producing for export or on those that would compete with imports. But they cannot avoid that adjustment." In the long run this may be incontrovertible, but much damage to the present precarious world economy may be done in the lifetime of this generation by the U.S. export surplus. Moreover, when all is said, can one accept the statement that "the production of primary commodities after the war was somewhat in excess of demand" as more than an indication that in the industrialised countries themselves there must have been a deep-seated economic maladjustment. The demand that failed was the effective demand generated by an economic system in which profitability depended on under-employment. Mr. Lewis glances at under-consumption as a causal factor of the slump of 1929, but dismisses it summarily. To the question whether his root evil, the over-production of primary commodities, would have been eliminated by more even distribution of wealth in the industrialised countries, he offers no answer.

AYLMER VALLANCE

THE IMAGE AND THE FLUX

The Pythoness and Other Poems. By KATHLEEN RAINE. *Hamish Hamilton.* 6s.
Symbols and Speculations. By JACQUETTA HAWKES. *Cresset Press.* 7s. 6d.
A Cloud Across the Sun. By SHEILA WINGFIELD. *Cresset Press.* 6s.

These are three dissimilar poets and, one imagines, three very different women. Yet they have a set of common themes. Each is trying to reconcile the old attitudes of religion with the new world picture of science, or the natural flux with the transcendent significance of the human image. This is one of the grand problems of our time, and men often solve it by cutting their losses on one side or the other: male extremes would be Mr. Graves's cult of magic and Mr. Roy Fuller's combative rationalism. Women are more aware than men, being more practical and less logical, of the need to have it both ways. Mr. Orwell has frightened us all away from the notion of "doublethink," but it does remain true that a willingness to polarise contradictory attitudes is of the essence of successful living. In war, for instance, or politics, a leader must behave as if he were going to win, even if the odds are on his losing. We have to pull against the natural tendency of things all the time, while recognising that tendency as real, and "doublethink," or the dualistic attitude, in the good sense, is an acceptance of that paradox, the intractability of concrete experience to one-level simplifying explanations. Our moral sense, for instance, does not explain away our animal mortality; nor does our animal mortality explain away our moral sense. It is with this kind of living interconnection of apparently incompatible levels that these three poets are concerned.

If, for instance, one allows that the feelings traditionally connected with institutional religion have any validity at all, one is at once faced with the necessity for a dualistic attitude about natural and revealed religion. Any religious attitude based on a particular revelation has at least a look of incompleteness and unfairness about it. On the other hand, if one bases a belief in natural religion on the *consensus gentium*, one is building on uncertain foundations—the peoples have been agreed, in their time, about many assumptions that are not true. Miss Raine, Miss Hawkes, and Miss Wingfield solve this problem, poetically, by doublethink: it is *as if* there were a revelation, though it would be extremely tactless to pin the revelation down to time and place. Miss Raine writes,

> To say that the word was ever here and now
> Or even that I imagined such a transit
> Would be to bind a stone to the current air, to founder
> Fleeting Galatea's murmuring shell.
> But for the space of a thought it was as if it seemed.

Miss Wingfield writes more simply, rather in the tradition of Hardy's double attitude to Christianity,

> What does it matter if our wise men stress
> The Barn as false, the Feast as wrong?
> I hold the Magi were the wiser, yes,
> To be believed in for so long.

For Miss Hawkes, whose attitude is not quite parallel, the religious attitude is rather something which has been rejected for what seem valid intellectual reasons but which leaves behind it an insistent gap, need, pain:

> It seemed, as under me the great globe swung,
> I knew some answer, unambiguous—
> But that was long ago and I was young.

I hope these quotations suggest how well worth reading these three volumes are. Of the three, Miss Raine's is the most accomplished and exciting, the most mature book of poems she has yet given us. Here is a tiny poem, *The World*,

on that theme of the natural flux and the transcendent image. It packs close and complex thinking into a crystal simplicity of form. Note the brilliant puns, on which the dual argument hangs, on "still" and "nothing";

It burns in the void,
Nothing upholds it.
Still it travels.

Travelling the void
Upheld by burning
Nothing is still.

Burning it travels.
The void upholds it.
Still it is nothing.

Nothing it travels
A burning void
Upheld by stillness.

And to show the extraordinary dignity and confidence of these poems, one might quote these lines, with their touch of Yeats, when Yeats has a touch of Landor:

I marvel at the soul's indifference.
For in her theatre the play is done,
The tears are shed; the actors, the immortals
In their ceaseless manifestation, elsewhere gone.

Miss Hawkes is not yet a mature poet in this sense. There is sometimes something a little immature in the material of her poems. One is a long daydream, for instance, about being the favourite concubine of a Kuban chieftain, sacrificed, on his death, along with his horses. Other poems with excellent themes, like *Man in Time*, inspired by the perception that the archaeologist, digging for the past in a backward country, has the past still alive around him in the customs and attitudes of his native workers, are a little too long and hampered by a rather mechanical eighteenth-century metric:

From sole of supple foot
Through undulating spine
Wavers the strain and stress
The lovely balanced line.

The actual verse line, there, is by no means wavering and balanced enough, for the sense it is expressing; it thuds, rather. On the other hand, there are moments when these drilled metres and that rather stiff diction have their own special charm, an old-world one:

Beneath the frigid lunar stare
Day's known colours are all fled;
The buttercup has yielded gold,
The clover, red.

Miss Hawkes is a poet to be watched, but she needs to develop a more exigent ear, a wariness of monotony, and perhaps a slightly more contemporary sense of idiom.

Miss Wingfield has an excellent ear, and also a coaxing eye for the telling detail:

O mussel coloured houses by the dunes
With fluttered boats feeling among the shoals,

but possibly she has not yet quite found her individual voice. In a beautifully muscular stanza:

Then, as a woman, I have found
What we inherit in our blood
From those who stood by Thammuz' queen,
Wailing for the menfolk drowned
In utter darkness of the flood,

one is reminded too immediately of the later Yeats, as, in another poem, where the countryman who talks of ghosts and penalties is contrasted with the thin, uprooted townsman, who talks of souls and punishments, one is reminded too immediately of the earlier Robert Graves. And the general theme, sometimes, is stated in a flat and abstract manner, which both Miss Raine and Miss Hawkes wisely eschew,

In the Creation's heart
Dissolve we must,
To become part
Of Absolute or dust.

"Absolute" is an opaque philosopher's word, "Creation" is tendentious (and, as set against "Absolute," has a jarringly different set of associations), and Miss Raine, for example, would break the dust smaller down yet, into the tiny dance of electrons. Yet, as a technician at least, Miss Wingfield has a stretch, a suppleness, and a control that make her notable among women poets.

G. S. FRASER

HUMOR AND HUMOUR

Sweet and Sour. By JOSEPH WECHSBERG. *Michael Joseph.* 10s. 6d.
Westward Ha! By S. J. PERELMAN. *Reinhardt & Evans.* 10s. 6d.
Cheaper by the Dozen. By FRANK B. GILBRETH and ERNESTINE GILBRETH CAREY. *Heinemann.* 8s. 6d.
Say Please. By VIRGINIA GRAHAM. *Harvill Press.* 7s. 6d.
Uncle Prog. By KENNETH PRINGLE. *Secker & Warburg.* 8s. 6d.

The English, in their modesty, seem quite content to compare English and American humour to the disadvantage of their own. Thousands sighed when the Jack Benny and Bob Hope programmes were no longer broadcast on the Home Service—the B.B.C Variety Department perhaps added its own sigh of relief—and English film comedies are regarded with suspicion; Hollywood orders these things so much better. The sophisticated smile patronisingly at *Punch* and roar at the most parochial joke in the *New Yorker*. And, of course, our modesty has some justification, though we forget that the greatest living humorist, Sir Max Beerbohm, is English, and that the Americans have produced no novelists to compare with Miss Nancy Mitford or Mr. Evelyn Waugh. American humour is a special little department on its own, whereas the best English humour is not to be found among the "funny" writers.

S. J. Perelman, who wrote *Crazy like a Fox*, is a typical American humorist, wisecracking (he writes scripts for Groucho Marx), fantastically elaborating on incidents which presumably did occur, and happily cynical. In *Westward Ha!* he describes a lightning tour of the world, and begins with a magnificent description of his preparations—(buying his contact lenses, "To insert them was but the work of a moment; all I had to do was pry open my eyes with a buttonhook")—but something happens to his rich, fantastic strain when he leaves America; he is still crazy like no one but Mr. Perelman; when he saw a Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur sucking an ice cream he says he could not have been more disenchanted if Marcel Proust had suddenly materialised with a mouthful of bubble gum. But through the milky haze of his contact lenses he seems a little over-awed by what he sees, even, for a moment, in Paris, breaking into a serious lament for the Paris he has known, and changing his long visit into no more than "a condolence call." A slight case of disappointment.

Mr. Wechsberg wrote *Looking for a Bluebird* and *Sweet and Sour* is another autobiography in the same style. He is a Czech with a Viennese background who has become an American, and shares the autobiographical manner of American humorists, but adds that peculiar, wistful quality of the Viennese; one could imagine him delighting his friends with these quietly told anecdotes outside a café in pre-Anschluss Vienna. Most of Mr. Wechsberg's stories are connected with his life as a wandering violinist, and although we are quite aware that he is touching up reality for us we know that something almost as funny as this did happen. Even the spoilt ballerina from Monte Carlo (fed on little cadeaux from Cartier) must have said something very like "*Je veux danser pour le radio! je veux, je veux, je veux!*" and her elderly admirer from the Near East must have done his best for her Firebird dance to be *described* over Radio Nice. *Sweet and Sour* seems to me to be one of the most delightfully funny books to be published for a long time, and the stories about the distinguished Herr Schostal, chief *claqueur* at the Vienna State opera, to have some historical interest; how much more human the great

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Wagnerian singers seem when we read of them insisting to Herr Schostal that there must be more applause than usual immediately after "*Siegmund bin Ich.*"

Cheaper by the Dozen, we are told, has "swept America." It is an addition to the *I Remember Papa* and *Life with Mother* school of writing. The authors are two of a family of twelve children (hence the title), and they reminisce over their childhood; the result is sometimes almost embarrassingly gauche, and the humour often seems to be intended for the Corn Belt, but there is a simple charm about the whole book. Perhaps it may even sweep England.

Say Please is a collection of pieces from *Punch* on the theme of post-war etiquette, and Miss Graham has a very pleasant gift for social satire. She keeps us constantly amused and delighting in those weaknesses of others which could never be shared by ourselves, and if I had not been reading Mr. Wechsberg and Mr. Perelman my pleasure would have been complete. One is forced into an odious comparison, to ask why Miss Graham doesn't quite stand up to them. It seems to be that she has fallen into the dangerous *Punch* trap of getting hold of one comic idea and playing it hell-for-leather in all its variations; the Americans, in general, let off squibs all over the place, their formula is to have no formula. The result is that they are funny without strain, whereas even Miss Graham suggests just vaguely the girl at the tennis party who is being frightfully amusing.

Mr. Pringle in *Uncle Prog* doesn't do this; he is a little like the party scream who has learnt to appear serious and never to laugh at his own jokes. His pompous style politely asks "Have I said something funny?" and sometimes we can answer "yes." Uncle Prog is an old character, returned from the East to settle in the village of Wigwit-Snoringpot, and the book is a series of his extravagant adventures, with the local school, with a poet called Timothy Boarsmilk who helps him in an attempt to popularise Travancore tea. In his incidental remarks and dialogue Mr. Pringle can be funny. Timothy Boarsmilk makes remarks like "Now I think I'll climb a tree and see what the birds are up to. Chaucer was a close observer of the amours of sparrows, and high-life in the tree-tops generally; but there remains much to be learnt for a poet equipped with the Freudian technique." Mr. Pringle's weakness seems to be in the stories he tells, which are not as funny as the way he tells them; but he may produce a really funny book once he gets over this.

And so, alas, the Americans win again in the occasional comparison which reviewers have to make between the two forms of writing, humor and humour. The "u" in glamour is said to be retained by us to make the word as glamourous as possible, and perhaps we have some such obscure motive for not dropping the "u" in humour; certainly it is self-consciousness among our humorous writers that is their bane and curse.

MICHAEL SWAN

THE LYSENKO AFFAIR

Russia Puts the Clock Back By JOHN LANGDON-DAVIES. *Gollancz.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

John Langdon-Davies seems to have won the race to produce an actual book, as opposed to mere articles, on the Lysenko question. *Russia Puts the Clock Back* is a topical pamphlet—clear, forceful and uninhibited. It is aimed at the general reader, who may be assumed to know little of genetics, either of the kind universally accepted in the world of science or of the peculiar local brand which has become the official Russian heresy. To such a reader, the main issues are explained simply and clearly. Perhaps in some ways the simplification is a little too drastic. Scientific genetics is, of course, a developing subject, and necessarily contains many as yet unresolved problems and unanswered questions. It is an important aspect of the Lysenko affair, on the technical level, that most of the philosophical considerations which the Russians advance as novel contributions of dialectical materialism have in fact long been accepted as general principles outside the Soviet sphere. The Russians claim that the facts of nature exhibit these principles with a childish simplicity for which everyone else has sought in vain. But it is not unimportant that several of the basic theoretical problems with which the Russians deal are among those which are the centre of interest in the West also; examples are the possibilities of non-chromosomal inheritance, and the relations between the hereditary factors and the metabolising cell in which they are located.

The most striking aspect of the Russian debate (published recently in English as *The Situation in Biological Science*) is the fantastically low level—of logic, of technical competence, of general knowledge, let alone of decent manners or comradely helpfulness—at which they were conducted. Not only are decisions on fundamental problems taken at a meeting of people who are primarily technicians rather than scientists—and anyone who has dealt with agricultural or other technicians the world over knows that scientifically objective methods of argument are not their strong point: but the crude and intemperate speeches of these farmers force one to remember that they are only removed by a generation or so from a life of serfdom and religious obscurantism. It is impossible to avoid the feeling that one is dealing with a backward, semi-barbarous culture, whose social ideas are so unsophisticated as to stultify almost completely the realisation of its ideals, however noble these may be.

Langdon-Davies gives a clear and sharp picture of these failings. He does not, however, tackle at all the profounder issues of the Lysenko affair as it affects social rather than narrowly scientific affairs. Is one, in fact, while recognising the mote in the Russians' eye overlooking a beam in one's own? Is it perhaps worse to shut a factory in a time of unemployment than to close down a scientific institute and dismiss its workers with vituperation? Is the Communist ideal of making possible a full life for everyone so great an advance on the essentially "elite" theories of Capitalism that one must be prepared, as for instance Gide was in the early Thirties, to accept the submergence of most of what we have so far considered the highest cultural activities as the price to be paid? In an organic democracy must we forgo the advantages of the specialisation of labour, and allow the workers by their greater numbers to settle the problems of the scientists? I think the answer in each case is in the negative. But such questions need arguing, and any treatment of the Russian attitude to science which omits them remains somewhat superficial.

Langdon-Davies' pamphlet, however, remains on the purely scientific level. Much of it is taken up with a devastating analysis of a wireless talk by Haldane. This was given at a time when he obviously had not made up his mind what attitude to adopt, and he made use of all his dialectical skill to score debating points, to introduce red herrings, and to avoid the main issues. Little remains of this performance when Langdon-Davies has finished with it; it was indeed a pitiful effort, excusable only as a stop-gap. But so it has proved to be. Langdon-Davies' line-by-line analysis looks rather out of date in the light of Haldane's more recent article *In Defence of Genetics* published in the MODERN QUARTERLY—a considered, honest and sensible treatment of the scientific, though not of all the social, questions involved in the controversy.

Haldane has had the courage to state that he is "a Darwinist, although Darwin wrote: 'Man, like every other animal, has no doubt advanced to his present condition through a struggle for existence . . .' Similarly, I am a Mendelist-Morganist . . ." He points out without circumlocution that the Lysenkoist attacks on genetics can be considered of scientific

importance only if they are considered in relation to the genetics of forty years ago. Weismann, he agrees with the rest of us, is a bit of a dead horse to start cudgelling in the mid twentieth century. Personally, I think that the dialectical-materialist method of approach to genetical problems can suggest more penetrating questions than any which he, in the short space available to him, brought forward in its support; for instance, the relation between an animal's inherent adaptability and the adaptation forced on it by natural selection, studied by Gause. But Haldane makes it clear that, whatever may be its potential services in the abstract, in this instance it has led to a situation in which "wholly unjustifiable attacks have been made on my profession" (of geneticist), and he is prepared to rally to the support of his fellow-workers in this field.

If Langdon-Davies had had this article before him when he wrote his pamphlet, he might have directed his attack to objects more deserving of it; for instance, Bernal's offering of predigested blarney in the same journal, which lacks the stiffening which would have been given by even a single piece of factual evidence.

C. H. WADDINGTON

SHORT STORIES

Tea With Mr. Rochester. By FRANCES TOWERS. *Michael Joseph.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Character and Situation. By CHRISTOPHER SYKES. *Collins.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Pick of To-day's Short Stories. Edited by JOHN PUDNEY. *Odhams Press.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Let me present you, as the cinema commentators say, with two typical, happy, familiar English scenes. First the rectory drawing-room on a late winter afternoon: the sunlight shines palely through the pretty mauve net curtains, the chintz—chosen for its brightness—has faded badly, the chinese lanterns and silver leaf look a little dusty in the Poole ware jugs, but the chatter about servants, and art, and the projected visit of the Thompsons to St. Moritz is gay and lively, when a little brown, humorous-eyed, plain, dowdy figure, withdraws herself unnoticed from the room. It is the literary daughter and she has gone upstairs to write in her commonplace book or diary satiric observations or fierce romantic communings in opposition to whatever may be the prevailing mood below. She has been doing this since Fanny Burney or before, and, though at times we may resent a certain self-satisfaction, a certain failure to see motes, we must salute her as one of the great manipulators of the English literary puppet-show. Frances Towers was one of the really unique and brilliant of this elect company, and it appears no exaggeration to say that her death in 1948 may have robbed us of a figure of more than purely contemporary significance.

At first glance one might be disposed to dismiss Miss Towers as an imitation Jane Austen, but it would be a very mistaken judgment, for her cool detachment and ironic eye are directed more often than not against the sensible breeze that blasts and withers, the forthright candour that kills the soul. If something of Jane Austen's manner is there, it is used in defence of the secret citadel, the inner being as the Brontes understood those terms. It is not doing, or creating, or saying, or even seeing Frontes that count in Miss Towers' world, but being—if she had a bedside book beside her declared favourites, the Brontes, Shakespeare, Sidney, I suspect it may have been *The Cloud of Unknowing*—but she is well aware of the dangers of a spurious interior life, and it is one of the excitements of her work that her understanding and compassion can swing our sympathies round in the very last sentence of a story or leave us wondering most painfully if the moral self-comfort we have drawn from the tale is quite what she intended.

Moving in a world that is confined to the villages of the Home Counties, to the areas round Well Walk or Cheyne Walk in London, straying only once into Bayswater in deprecation, and writing in a subtle, allusive, but formal style, she might be dismissed as a good but rather limited writer. This homogeneity, this geographical and social narrowness are, however, deeply deceptive, for she flashes and shines now this way, now that, like a darting sunfish. *Lucinda*, for example, opens with a perfect Compton-Burnett family in whose conversation that authoress herself might well take pride; then, somehow without incongruity, a fantasy is introduced that never falls into whimsy; finally as we are happily arrayed against sharpness and talent, there is a little twist once more that tells us that not even the pure in heart can always be quite sure they have seen God. In the last resort, however, it is her satiric wit that must captivate the most reluctant reader. The writers of the secret diaries may be the elect, yet note how Miss Towers describes the quiet, plain Sophy's entry in the first story, *Violet*:

> *Notre domestique*, wrote Sophy, in the green ink she affected, "is no ordinary scullion."

Or the smart intellectual Sandra's reflections in *Strings in Hollow Shells*—

> One had known such wonderful people. . . . One wore a gold cloak in their company and pinned orchids at one's breast and walked on tip-toe. But always something happened, some cruelty, some perfidy, and one's heart was cracked in two.

Or the unexpected social criticism in *The Chosen and the Rejected*—

> "Something very gracious will perish, I'm afraid, when the aristocratic tradition is thrown on the bonfire. It is grace," she said, "that is so sadly lacking in those who are about to inherit the earth."
>
> "And whose fault is that," asked Mrs. Smithers rather fiercely.
>
> "I don't know." Miss Hillia replied with her maddeningly tranquil air, "but surely not the fault of those who have cared for beauty."

It is a bitter thought that we shall hear no more of this. Now let us go back to our commentary. Scene number two is a club-room in Pall Mall on a foggy November night, the atmosphere of the old Pall Mall Magazine hangs heavily and indigestibly over all, with an aura of horsehair, Napoleon brandy and cigar smoke. Old wounds in the leg throb faintly, once they were those of Inkerman and Omdurman, then of Paschendaale and Ypres, and now of Dunkirk and El Alamein. The conversation drones on interminably. "Lima is a strange place," said Carruthers, "especially in Spring." Or, "I only knew one good Hindu and he was half Sikh." Down from the 1890's the long, boring circumstantial talk has flowed, poisoning even the crystal lakes of Somerset Maugham, bubbling through the broad rivers of John Buchan, or, on a lower level, the streams of Sapper in his *Jim Maitland* series, faint vestiges of it polluted the cold, bitter waters of Evelyn Waugh's travel books, and it has certainly trickled into the stories of Mr. Christopher Sykes. He takes us from North Africa to the North-West Frontier, through Persia, Spain and the Congo to Chantilly, and covers all with the same rambling, circumstantial, uncontrolled narrative of club man reporting club man. One can almost hear the pauses, the "Wait a minute though, it couldn't have been '08 because that show at Daly's . . ." only, of course, Mr. Sykes is more modern. He has a conscious social standpoint. First, he is a Catholic, and then there is an atmosphere of "behind Tito's lines," amateur Foreign Office, and up-to-date Conservatism that makes these stories less aimless than their ancestors, but really no less naive or boring. There is the Catholic Chaplain with the Eighth Army:

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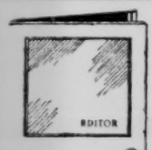

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Mr. Pudney has selected his stories primarily for entertainment and among big names—Elizabeth Bowen, Graham Greene, H. E. Bates, Evelyn Waugh, etc. It is perhaps for this reason that the volume has the disappointing air of a holiday annual. Elizabeth Berridge, Sean O'Faolain and William Plomer maintain a high level, but the outstanding story is probably that by Fred Urquhart. ANGUS WILSON

Demosthenes VII. Translated by N. W. and N. J. Dewitt.

Cicero, De Inventione, etc. Translated by H. M. Hubbell.

Prudentius I. Translated by H. J. Thompson. *Heinemann and Harvard University Press.* 15*s.* each.

Prudentius, whom the French call *Prudence,* is not a poet who appeals to the common reader. He is studied only by those interested in later Latin prosody or in early Christian hymns. His verses are those of a middle-aged gentleman, with marked vegetarian and teetotal tendencies, whose long-windedness is apt, as he himself admits, to produce *fastidia.* He was a Spaniard who regarded Rome as the inheritor of the past and the nurse of the future, and who was deeply distressed by the obstinate vitality of paganism. He denounces those who sacrifice to the Lady of Cythera "and other monstrosities"; he sneers at the great man who, with his last words, promised a cock to Aesculapius; and he dismisses the thoughts of Plato as *deliramenta.* It pleased him to feel that the Roman proletariat, once "sick with their pagan errors," would now stream to the Vatican hill or to the Lateran. Yet the hymns of his "Daily Round" with their gently iterant metre have the simple charm of all early canticles. *Lucem redde tuis, Christe, fidelibus* is the recurrent theme of these simple songs. Prudentius may lack both humour and concision, but there is a melodious humility about his poems which fully justifies their inclusion in the Loeb Library.

A second volume which has recently been added to this useful library of translations from the classics contains three of Cicero's studies of the art of Rhetoric: the *De Inventione,* the *De Optimo Genere Oratorum* and the *Topica.* Neither of these three essays on the practice of rhetoric is as complete or illuminating as the *De Oratore;* the first and the last are mainly concerned with the practical technique of forensic pleading. The *De Inventione* was written when Cicero was a student of nineteen years of age, and represents lecture notes "which escaped from my notebook." It is interesting as showing the extremely mechanical type of training which a law-student then obtained. The *Topica,* which takes the form of a letter written by Cicero to Trebatius while sailing from Velia to Reghium, is an essay on argumentation. The most interesting of the three is the maturer and more careful essay which he composed upon the nature of Greek oratory. Should a rhetorician adopt the austere and sparse style of the Attic school or indulge in Asiatic luxuriance? Cicero contends that the masters of Greek oratory, such as Demosthenes, were able to combine splendour with simplicity. "Demosthenes could certainly speak calmly, but Lysias perhaps not with passion." The orator, in fact, should suit his style both to his audience and to his occasion; to declaim Periclean periods to an ordinary jury displays no sense of audience and no sense of occasion; but there is, in fact, no conflict between the Attic and the Asian mode, since the supreme Greek orators combined both methods. *Bene dicere, id est Attice dicere:* if you want to speak well, learn from the Athenians.

A third benefit which the Loeb Library have now conferred upon the wandering and incomplete scholar is a final volume of Demosthenes, in which is inserted a general index which will prove of the utmost value. The volume includes the funeral oration which Demosthenes is supposed to have delivered over those that fell at Chaeronea. It is a dull and formalised set-piece. It also includes a short "Erotic Essay" addressed to Epicrates, the young man at whose house, "near the Olympieum," Lysias, as we know from the *Phaedrus,* delivered his discourse on love. This again is highly conventional. And finally there is a collection of stock Exordia which Demosthenes used as the preludes to his speeches. Once again the Loeb Classical Library have done an excellent piece of work.

Probation and Re-Education. By ELIZABETH R. GLOVER. *Routledge.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The foreword to this book suggests that we have created an environment in which offences must occur. Even a partial acceptance of this makes it imperative that the consequences of delinquency should be, in suitable cases, accompanied by an attempt at re-habilitation. The co-operation of the offender in this is the basis of probation. The author, with ample qualifications, deals mainly with youthful offenders, but shows that the home and environment are often as much to blame as the delinquent. Adults, therefore, come into the picture, and the problems they create are fully considered. Histories of many cases, with details of treatment, are given, and make one regret that delinquency is the only door leading to the application of so much effort and wisdom. Many non-delinquents, especially those who owe their immunity to luck, would benefit from much of the treatment here outlined. During the "build-up" of a girl dealt with by one of her colleagues the author relates these events: the birth of a second illegitimate child; driving lessons; and promotion, following desertion, in the Services. In this unusual case two years were devoted to the work of probation and eight to the mission of befriending. Clearly there are no limited objectives and, despite an occasional relapse, success is considered attainable by all. Something is said of psychiatry and the factors which recommend or limit its use. Three per cent. of Approved School cases need psychiatric treatment, and there is a suggestion that the number would be higher if psychiatrists themselves made the "classification." Few will doubt it, but the advantage remains to be proved. Refusal to regard a youth as a "case" may in itself be sound psychology. A recent Government Memorandum urges the need for energetic action by all who are in a position to help in limiting juvenile delinquency. They will find much in this book to inform and guide them.

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Report by Richard Lister

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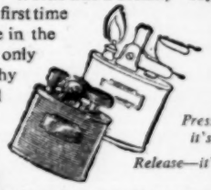

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WATCH for that COLD! use ASPRO at FIRST SIGNS!

To know WHAT to do is only half the secret of success—the other half is knowing WHEN to do it. A cold or 'flu attack needs the right treatment at the right moment. When the first sneezy, shivering, sniffling symptoms come — IT'S THEN YOU SHOULD TAKE ACTION BY TAKING A COUPLE OF 'ASPRO' TABLETS. 'ASPRO' wastes no time—its action is safe, soothing and instant—it reduces the temperature, clears the head, dispels the chilly feelings. A wise plan is to TAKE TWO MORE 'ASPRO' TABLETS WITH A HOT DRINK ON GOING TO BED. In all probability that will be the last you will know of the cold.

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Dear Sir, Malvern, Hillary, Natal.
I have much pleasure in thanking you for your wonderful 'ASPRO' which stopped a severe attack of chest cold, after suffering about twelve months. At first I tried many a medicine but none put an end to it. At last I gave 'ASPRO' a trial and the result is wonderful and I am more than pleased with it.
Yours faithfully, P. S. REDDY.
P.S.—I have written this letter for you to read and will you please let the public read it too.

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